Isan: No Footprints in the Blue Sky

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Chapter #1

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OUR BELOVED MASTER,
ONE NIGHT ISAN WAS IN ATTENDANCE ON HYAKUJO, SITTING TILL LATE IN THE QUIETNESS OF THE MOUNTAIN TEMPLE.
"WHO ARE YOU?" HYAKUJO ASKED.
"REIYU," REPLIED ISAN.
"RAKE IN THE FIREPLACE," INSTRUCTED HYAKUJO.
ISAN DID AS HE WAS TOLD AND SAID, "I FIND NO EMBERS LEFT." HYAKUJO TOOK UP THE TONGS AND, RAKING DEEP DOWN, BROUGHT UP A TINY BURNING EMBER, WHICH HE SHOWED TO ISAN, AND SAID, "JUST THIS, YOU SEE!"
ISAN WAS SUDDENLY ENLIGHTENED. HE BOWED DEEPLY AND RELATED HIS POINT OF REALIZATION TO HYAKUJO, WHO SAID, "YOU HAVE REACHED A CROSSROADS ON THE BUDDHA NATURE; YOU SHOULD OBSERVE TIME AND

CAUSATION. WHEN THE TIME COMES, YOU WILL REALIZE IT, JUST LIKE REMEMBERING SOMETHING YOU HAVE FORGOTTEN. IT IS NOT OBTAINED FROM OTHERS. THEREFORE, WHEN YOU ARE ENLIGHTENED, YOUR ORIGINAL NATURE MANIFESTS ITSELF. NOW YOU HAVE ATTAINED IT -- CAREFULLY CULTIVATE IT."

Maneesha, today we start a new series of talks on Zen, particularly on Master Isan. The name of the series will give you an indication what kind of man Isan was. The title of the series is **ISAN: NO FOOTPRINTS IN THE BLUE SKY**. He was as great a master as one can be, but has left behind him neither great scriptures nor great commentaries. Isan functioned exactly as Buddha had said an authentic master would -- to disappear in the blue sky like a bird, leaving no footprints.

Why this idea of leaving no footprints? It has great implications in it. It means a great master does not create a following; he does not make a path for everybody to follow. He flies in the sky, he gives you a longing for flying, and disappears into the blueness of the sky -- creating an urge in you to discover what it is like to disappear into the ultimate.

Isan followed exactly what Buddha had said. He is a great master, but almost forgotten. Who remembers people who have not created great followings, who have not made organized religions, who have not chosen their successors, who have not made their religion a politics, a power in the material world? Isan did none of that. He simply lived silently. Of course thousands of disciples were attracted

towards him, but it was not his fault. You cannot blame him for it -- it was just the magnetic force that he had become by disappearing into enlightenment. The light shone to faraway lands and those who had eyes started moving towards a small place hidden in the forest where Isan lived. Slowly slowly, thousands of disciples were living in the forest -- and Isan had not called a single one. They had come on their own.

And remember the difference: when you come on your own, you come totally. When you are called, there is a reluctance, a fear: perhaps you will be dominated. But when you come on your own, you have lived your life, you have known the meaninglessness of it. You are coming out of a great understanding that life has nothing to offer. You are coming with your wholeness and totality -- and with an urgency, because nobody knows: tomorrow you may be here on the earth or not. Death can knock on your doors any moment, it is unpredictable. It rarely comes to warn the person, "I am coming." Once in a while it has happened, in stories....

The next moment is not certain. All that you have is this moment. So don't disperse your consciousness; concentrate it on this moment. If you want really to know the ultimate source of being and the tremendous blessings of it, this single moment is enough.

Don't follow anybody's footprints. Truth cannot be borrowed, neither can the path that somebody else has trodden. You have to enter into a virgin land of your own inner space, where nobody can enter in any way.

The deeper you go, the more alone you are. Friends and foes, families and the society, slowly slowly, all drop away

as you are dropping your mind. Once the mind is finished, you are left in total aloneness. And this aloneness is such a great joy.... Remember, it is not loneliness. Loneliness is a desire for the other. Aloneness is a fulfillment unto oneself. One is enough, one is the whole universe. So whatsoever the dictionaries say is absolutely wrong. They make aloneness and loneliness synonymous -- that is not true. As far as existential experience is concerned, Isan lived alone. But his aloneness became such a radiant splendor that people came towards him on their own, towards this great silence, this immense beauty of truth.

This man has reached home; just being in his presence, perhaps you may find your way also. He is not going to give you the way, but in his presence many things are possible. One is that you will become certain that the experience of enlightenment is not an imagination of poets, or a philosophical system of philosophers. It is an authentic realization. You can feel it, you can almost touch it, and if your heart is open, you can see your heart dancing with joy. Your whole life near a man like Isan will take wings.

So thousands came. But Isan has not given any guidance; therefore I have chosen the title from Buddha's statement: **ISAN: NO FOOTPRINTS IN THE BLUE SKY**. He just fluttered into the sky, attracting those who had forgotten their wings; provoking, challenging those who had forgotten their sky, their freedom. Then he disappeared into the faraway sky, into the blueness, leaving no footprints but leaving a tremendous urge to go to those dimensions where you are no more.

Your being no more is the ultimate realization of truth.

You are the barrier, you are the problem. You are the only problem. As you melt away, something in you which is eternal, which you cannot call your self, something in you which belongs to the whole cosmos, starts appearing. What you used to call your self was only dust.

Before I take the sutras, a little introductory note about the life of Isan:

ISAN REIYU, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS KUEI-SHAN LING-YU, LIVED FROM 771 TO 853. HE LEFT HOME AT FIFTEEN TO BECOME A MONK, STUDYING UNDER THE LOCAL VINAYA MASTER IN WHAT IS TODAY THE FUKIEN PROVINCE.

These are things that may seem non-essential, but I feel they have a great meaning to be understood. He left home at fifteen... there was a totally different world, a totally different urge in humanity. What is a fifteen-year-old boy...? But the urge must have been so widespread and so thick in the atmosphere that even a fifteen-year-old boy is intelligent enough; he will catch the fire.

It is said that there are people who go on repeating the same foolish act again and again, but never learn anything. That's why history repeats. It is because of the idiots; otherwise there is no reason for history to repeat. It will always bring a new dawn -- not old, rotten, lived, finished completely. But history has to repeat because idiots go on and on repeating themselves, and they are the makers of history. It is unintelligence that makes it possible for history to repeat. The saying is that the unintelligent will not learn from his own mistakes, but the intelligent can even learn from others' mistakes. And the man who can learn from others' mistakes has a great potential. At the age of fifteen, Isan

must have learned from others' mistakes. He must have watched carefully his parents, his neighbors, his teachers -- their lifeless lives, their meaningless wanderings, no sense of direction except misery and suffering. All that they have is some promising hope that may be fulfilled in the future, perhaps in the next life or perhaps in paradise. But this life is going to be a suffering, it cannot be otherwise. It is the nature of life and they have accepted it. At the age of fifteen he left his home. He was not going to commit the same mistakes that everybody else was committing.

HE LEFT HOME AT FIFTEEN TO BECOME A MONK, STUDYING UNDER THE LOCAL VINAYA MASTER.

A Vinaya master is only a rabbi, a pundit, a learned scholar. Vinaya is the name of the Buddhist scriptures. The very word `vinaya' means humbleness, and Buddha teaches that to be humble is to be close to nature. All his scriptures -- and they are many -- have been called the Vinaya scriptures because their fundamental teaching, from different directions, is the same: just to be nobody, just to be ready to disappear into the blueness of the sky without leaving any footprints.

Obviously he was in search; he went to study under the local Vinaya master. A fifteen-year-old boy does not know where to go. So whoever was in the locality, the most famous and learned scholar -- he went to him.

HE WAS ORDAINED AT HANGCHOW AT THE AGE OF TWENTY-THREE.

Being ordained means that now he is making an absolute commitment to find himself. He is declaring to the world, "Help me not to go astray." It is an announcement on his part of his innermost longing. Now it becomes socially

known that he is a seeker, and in those days seekers were helped by the society in every possible way -- with food, clothes, shelter. The whole society seemed to be running around the central longing of becoming a buddha. If circumstances wouldn't allow them now, people were waiting for the right circumstances so they could escape in the blue sky.

Today we are very small in that sense. Our desires are for money, our desires are for beautiful houses, our desires are for success in the world -- fame, name, political power. In terms of spiritual skill we have fallen, certainly. In those old days people were poor, with no science, no technology, but still they were superior in the sense that their whole longing was to search for the meaning of life. And anybody who was searching for the meaning of life... at least if you could not go so far, you could help. Helping anybody who was searching for truth was in itself considered a great virtue.

And I accept the idea. A society should live... of course everybody cannot be a monk unless my strategy is followed. And it is a little complicated to remain a witness in your ordinary life. It is easier to be a witness if you live in a monastery, or if you are a monk and you don't deal with ordinary life. You don't earn any money, you don't have any power, you live just on begging -- just one meal a day. Because the society was so poor, Buddha told his ordained monks, "You should collect your one meal" -- only one meal was allowed in twenty-four hours -- "from seven houses. Just piece by piece, so you are not a burden on anybody."

Now, just one monk going to beg from seven houses is not a burden, because every house is giving him such a small piece. Because of this fact, the seekers and searchers would not be involved in business and waste their time. Their total energy should be directed towards a single point, their central being. Society should help them because their rising consciousness is going to help the society also.

You may know, you may not know: the few buddhas that have happened in history have raised your consciousness without your knowing. Without them you would still be in the jungles. You have not done anything, but the atmosphere has been changed by each buddha. He has given so much in abundance... don't think that a piece of bread is enough to pay him. We cannot pay him in any way; his contribution to human consciousness is so great and his carefulness....

Buddha told his monks, "Take your one meal from seven houses and never stay in one village for more than three days. Go on moving, because by remaining in one village you may become a kind of drag to people. Every day they have to give something to you. Leave before they become in any way annoyed by you."

And it is a great psychological insight, because it takes people four days to become familiar with persons or places. If you change your house, it will take four days for you to become at ease with the new house. Before the village becomes familiar, you should leave. You are an outsider, you are not allowed to become familiar, friendly. You have to remain a stranger. You have chosen the path of being a stranger.

ORDAINED AT HANGCHOW AT THE AGE OF TWENTY-THREE, HE TRAVELED TO CHIANG-SI AND BECAME A DISCIPLE OF HYAKUJO.

He found the master. The learned teachers that he must have come across could not fulfill his appetite. They could not give him what he was asking for. He was not asking for more knowledge; he was searching for the one who knows. He was interested to inquire into the very structure of the knower, of the witness.

Naturally, the scholars cannot do that. They can quote great quotations, but they cannot radiate buddhahood. They are not an argument for their own quotations, they are not a support to their own learnedness. Their whole life is so ordinary; it does not show the grace and the beauty and the blissfulness of which they are talking. So any intelligent seeker will soon realize that this man has only words; he does not know the meaning. He is carrying a dead corpse but he is not aware that the person is dead.

All the scholars of the world are gravediggers. They dig deeply into graves and find bones of all kinds of people, but they never dig deep into themselves. They may find the bones of Buddha... they even worship the bones when they find them.

In Sri Lanka, in Kandy, they have a great temple devoted to a tooth of Buddha. Every scientific test has proved that it is not a tooth of a human being, it is too big; it can only be that of an animal. But who cares about it? Kandy attracts more pilgrimages to Sri Lanka than any other temple because it has a tooth of Gautam Buddha.

Scholars sometimes seem to be so stupid. There was a hair in Srinagar, in Kashmir, thought to be Hazrat Mohammed's.

Mohammedans worshipped it because that was the only relic left from the body of Mohammed. Nobody knows whose hair it is, and there is no way to prove that it is Mohammed's hair. But a few years back it was stolen. Then there was great fuss all over the world amongst the Mohammedans. That mosque, Hazrat Bal...bal means hair; even the bal is to be called Hazrat, Osho -- "revered hair." And it was such a difficult situation. Riots started happening because Mohammedans thought certainly it must be the Hindus. And Hindus are a very small minority in Kashmir. Even though Hindu leaders in Kashmir declared again and again, "We are not concerned at all with your religion," it was to no avail.

Finally the Indian prime minister, Jawaharlal Nehru, had to send the chief of the armies with a great number of soldiers to surround the mosque and somehow manage to restore the hair.

Now, how can you manage? Somehow it was managed: somebody's hair has been put in the tube which was empty. Now everybody is happy that the hair has been found. What kind of stupidity...? What will you do with the hair? If you find the whole head of Mohammed, that too will not help. But people are concerned with absolute absurdities, so much involved, and this is because of the scholars, the so-called learned who provoke the masses.

Isan must have moved from one teacher to another teacher. He went on, looking for a man who is essential, who is not a Buddhist but a buddha, who does not believe in any hypotheses -- who knows. And when he came to Hyakujo, immediately something transpired. He found the master.

That was the way students, disciples, devotees, went on searching, from one monastery to another monastery, from one monk to another monk. There are no visible signs, no certificates to say who is enlightened. You have to find with your own heart someone in whose presence your heart starts dancing. It is an inner finding -- one in whose presence your whole life becomes light, in whose presence certainly your mind is gone as if it had been a shadow, and utter silence falls over you.

When he came to Hyakujo, he immediately became a disciple.

LATER, HYAKUJO SENT ISAN TO MOUNT I AS ABBOT. ISAN LIVED AS A WILD HERMIT INITIALLY, BUT BY AND BY BEGAN TO ATTRACT DISCIPLES; THEY FINALLY INCREASED TO ONE THOUSAND IN NUMBER. ISAN TAUGHT AT MOUNT I FOR MORE THAN FORTY YEARS.

This was just a small biographical note. Now the sutras.

ONE NIGHT ISAN WAS IN ATTENDANCE ON HYAKUJO, SITTING TILL LATE IN THE QUIETNESS OF THE MOUNTAIN TEMPLE.

"WHO ARE YOU?" HYAKUJO ASKED.

"REIYU," REPLIED ISAN.

"RAKE IN THE FIREPLACE," INSTRUCTED HYAKUJO.

ISAN DID AS HE WAS TOLD AND SAID, "I FIND NO EMBERS LEFT" -- the fire is completely gone, there are no more embers left.

HYAKUJO TOOK UP THE TONGS AND, RAKING DEEP DOWN, BROUGHT UP A TINY BURNING

EMBER, WHICH HE SHOWED TO ISAN, AND SAID, "JUST THIS, YOU SEE! -- you did not go deep enough."
On a silent night in a mountain temple... everything a master does has a purpose. He has asked Isan to find out if there is any fire left in the wood. The night is becoming colder; just find out. Ordinarily, it is an insignificant act. Isan did as he was told, but said, "I find no embers left. The fire has completely gone out."
HYAKUJO TOOK UP THE TONGS.... This is the way Zen is -- a direct teaching, no words. HYAKUJO TOOK UP THE TONGS AND, RAKING DEEP DOWN, BROUGHT UP A TINY BURNING EMBER, WHICH HE SHOWED TO ISAN, AND SAID, "JUST THIS, YOU SEE! You did not go deep enough."
ISAN WAS SUDDENLY ENLIGHTENED... because this was the exact situation in his meditations. He was going, but not deep enough to find the fire of life. Immediately, without saying anything -- enlightenment is not being talked about -- but seeing Hyakujo's action, that by going deep he has found an ember, Isan must have gone deep into himself. He had been meditating, but must not have been going deep enough to find the living fire.
ISAN WAS SUDDENLY ENLIGHTENED.
It is very difficult for rational people to understand how enlightenment can be sudden. It is sudden if you understand how Zen masters create, out of every situation, some indication which cannot be said in words. In words he has said again and again, "Go deep!" But it can be only said; it all depends whether you go deep or not.
Hyakujo has to create a very clear-cut, existential situation to show Isan that he has not been going deep enough. And

a simple thing -- finding the ember -- made Isan go as deep as possible within himself. In that silent night he found his inner fire; he became enlightened. It looks sudden. It is not so sudden -- years of studying, years of meditating. But at the right moment the master gives you a situation which will indicate to you what is missing.

He was not daring to go to the very center; otherwise how can you miss the living fire? You are alive! How can you miss your divinity, how can you miss your buddha?

ISAN WAS SUDDENLY ENLIGHTENED. HE BOWED DEEPLY AND RELATED HIS POINT OF REALIZATION TO HYAKUJO, WHO SAID, "YOU HAVE REACHED A CROSSROADS ON THE BUDDHA NATURE; YOU SHOULD OBSERVE TIME AND CAUSATION."

Even though he has become enlightened, he has to give roots to his enlightenment. Otherwise, it will remain only a faraway glimpse, soon forgotten, or maybe remembered only as an echo, miles away. Now you should water carefully the sudden flowering within you. Now you should keep watch around the clock that your treasure is increasing, that your inner sky is spreading wider and wider, that your wings are growing, that the time for the ultimate flight of the dewdrop to the ocean is coming closer.

Hyakujo said to him: "YOU HAVE REACHED A CROSSROADS ON THE BUDDHA NATURE; YOU SHOULD OBSERVE TIME AND CAUSATION."

Now, be watchful. What has caused your enlightenment is an ordinary, mundane thing. You should remember now that by going deeper, suddenly you became enlightened;

you can go still deeper. There is, in fact, no boundary line where you have to stop. You can go so deep that you become the depth. Only then has your enlightenment grown roots. Now it cannot be destroyed, it is no longer a seasonal flower.

"WHEN THE TIME COMES, YOU WILL REALIZE IT, JUST LIKE REMEMBERING SOMETHING YOU HAVE FORGOTTEN."

What you have seen today is the first glimpse, which has put you on a crossroads. You can still go astray, the other roads are still available. Now be careful. What has caused it is going deeper, so go on, deeper and deeper and deeper. Never stop before you yourself become the depth, just an empty abyss.

That is the time when spring comes to your being. You will realize it then, that you have not achieved anything; it is just like remembering something you have forgotten. It has always been there, so it is not something new that you have achieved. It is something that you have forgotten so long ago that you don't have any idea when you forgot it. Now you have remembered.

The moment your enlightenment becomes just a remembrance, it becomes your very breathing, it becomes your very heartbeat. Then you don't need any meditation. Then your whole life is meditation. Without any effort, effortlessly, you are a buddha. If there is any effort, that means something is missing. When the buddha is natural, you are a buddha even in your sleep. Waking, working, whatever you do -- your fragrance of buddhahood will be there around you.

But this will happen only when you have reached to the ultimate depth and the realization is not taken as an achievement but only as a remembrance. So don't start bragging about it, because it is not an achievement -- what is there to brag about? You simply drown yourself into this new, abandoned, forgotten space, which is your very being. And millions of things are going to happen, but you are not the doer. They will be simply happening because your presence has reached such depths. When your witnessing has reached to the ultimate depth, flowers will start blossoming, lotuses will open -- a dawn has come to you, you are reborn. You were dead, now you are alive. A new life spreads all over you and brings great beauty and truth and grace.

"IT IS NOT OBTAINED FROM OTHERS. THEREFORE, WHEN YOU ARE ENLIGHTENED, YOUR ORIGINAL NATURE MANIFESTS ITSELF. NOW YOU HAVE ATTAINED IT -- CAREFULLY CULTIVATE IT."

This is a very significant statement of Hyakujo. You cannot cultivate enlightenment, that will be phony. You can walk like a buddha, you can manage to sit in the lotus posture -- it may take a little time for you, the bones... and particularly people coming from the West will find it more difficult. Colder countries devise chairs; hotter countries have no problem in sitting on the floor. But in colder countries, to sit on the floor is difficult. So if Buddha is sitting in the lotus posture, that does not mean that you have to sit in the lotus posture, only then you will become a buddha. You can practice it -- there are many idiots who are doing that, unnecessarily torturing themselves.

Buddhahood is your nature, so you cannot cultivate it. But what Hyakujo means is totally different. He is saying, "NOW THAT YOU HAVE ATTAINED IT -- CAREFULLY CULTIVATE IT. This attainment is so new, it is possible to fall back into darkness. It is possible to start thinking again that it may have been an imagination. All kinds of possibilities are there. The glimpse that you have is very fresh and young, and your past of ignorance is very long -- four million years; it has a weight. This new insight can be destroyed by that weight. This new flower that has blossomed in you can be crushed by a mountainous past."

You cannot cultivate enlightenment if you have not attained it. So first, attain it -- it looks strange -- first attain the glimpse and then protect, cultivate it; then make arrangements so that the past does not overtake you, because the weight of the old is very great and the new is always delicate.

So remember, Hyakujo is not saying to cultivate enlightenment. He is saying, first get it and then be careful in every possible way to protect it, to refine it, to go deeper into it, to find more roots to it. The real work starts when you have become enlightened. All that work you have done before enlightenment looks like a very tiny effort.

The great effort starts with your first glimpse of enlightenment. You can fall from it -- the whole past will be pulling you backwards, the whole past will be saying to you that this is all imagination.

You have to be very alert. The past is your enemy, and this fresh sprout, this new flower -- so small and so fragile, but so beautiful -- if you can manage to protect it, soon it will

become your eternity. Soon it will become your nature. Then there is no effort.

When Zen masters say "effortlessness" they are referring to the state when your enlightenment is well rooted. Now there is no need of any effort; now you can be relaxed and at ease, it will grow on its own accord. It will bring much foliage, and many flowers, and many blessings.

Sekiso wrote:

THE DHARMA SPRING
HAS NEVER RUN DRY;
IT IS FLOWING EVEN NOW.
A SINGLE DROP HAS FALLEN AND SPREAD
FAR AND DEEP.
DON'T BE CAUGHT
BY THE DECORATIONS AT THE EDGE
AND THE WALL AROUND IT.
IN THE DEAD OF NIGHT THE MOON SHINES
FROM THE MIDDLE OF THE POND.

What Sekiso is saying is very symbolic. THE DHARMA SPRING -- the spring when those who are ripe become suddenly full of flowers, when the dark night ends and the morning has come -- THE DHARMA SPRING HAS NEVER RUN DRY. He is saying, "Remember, the dharma spring has never run dry; it always comes, just as it used to come in Gautam Buddha's time, or even before." It is part of eternal nature. It is just that you have to be ready to catch the train. The train always comes, but mostly either you reach the railway station before the train has come, or you reach after the train has left -- you always find an empty platform. Sad and frustrated, you go back home.

I have heard, three professors were discussing very hotly some philosophical point at the railway station. They got so involved in the discussion, and they forgot that the train stops for only three minutes. As the train started moving, still they were not aware. Suddenly one of them saw, and all three ran to catch the train. Only two could manage to get on to the last compartment. One was left, and he was standing there so sad that a porter, who had been watching what was happening, said, "Why are you so sad? Soon there will be a second train coming, and just within a few hours you will meet your friends."

He said, "That is not the point. I am the one who was supposed to go! They had come only to see me off. Now everything has become a mess...."

But in a hurry, it can happen.

THE DHARMA SPRING HAS NEVER RUN DRY. It always is available; just you are not ready. The whole responsibility has to be taken by you, on your own shoulders. The existence is as much in favor of buddhas as it has always been, but you are not even looking at it. You are not preparing, you are not even witnessing so that when it comes...

In fact it never comes, it is always there -- YOU come to IT. The deeper your witnessing, and suddenly you find a tremendous reality flooding you. In your very innermost center it is still waiting.

THE DHARMA SPRING HAS NEVER RUN DRY; IT IS FLOWING EVEN NOW. A SINGLE DROP HAS FALLEN AND SPREAD FAR AND DEEP.

The ocean of dharma spring is always ready to absorb you; it has always space for you, you are always welcome.

Nobody has been rejected by dharma nature. If even a single drop has fallen, it has spread all over the ocean, FAR AND DEEP.

DON'T BE CAUGHT BY THE DECORATIONS AT THE EDGE AND THE WALL AROUND IT. IN THE DEAD OF NIGHT THE MOON SHINES FROM THE MIDDLE OF THE POND.

We are all attracted by decorations, by the non-essentials. A lake may have a wall around it with beautiful statues, sculpture, architectural designs. And you may get so much involved in those decorations that you fail to see that the pond is reflecting the moon, exactly in the middle.

This is just symbolic. It is saying that the existential truth is always shining in the middle of this whole world of decorations. Power, all kinds of desires, motivations, longings -- amongst this whole crowd, exactly in the middle, exactly in the center of your being, the full moon is reflected. Don't get caught in decorations.

Question 1

Maneesha has asked:

OUR BELOVED MASTER,

I HAVE HEARD YOU SAY THAT THE ENLIGHTENED ONES, LIKE BIRDS, LEAVE NO FOOTPRINTS BEHIND THEM. YET PEOPLE LIKE ISAN TOUCH OUR CONSCIOUSNESS HUNDREDS OF YEARS AFTER THEY HAVE DIED. COULD YOU PLEASE COMMENT?

Maneesha, touching your consciousness is another matter. To the open consciousness, all the buddhas are available this very moment to celebrate you, to take you into the new

space that you have been avoiding for centuries. But that is not making footprints. It is beyond the capacity of a bird to make footprints in the sky.

The inner world is almost like the sky -- it is the inner sky. And the people who have entered into the inner world cannot leave footprints either. It is just to say that you cannot follow them from the outside, through their words, through their scriptures. You have to go into yourself, and suddenly you will be surprised that you have disappeared and a buddha has appeared. You were not following Buddha's footprints -- he cannot make any. In the sky you cannot write anything.

All the scriptures and all the great religions are befooling and exploiting the masses. One has to go within, and all the religions are supporting you to go out -- towards Jesus, towards Moses, towards Mohammed, towards Buddha, but go outwards. Follow their teachings, follow their commandments. That is what Buddha says is going astray. No buddha can leave any footprints, so how can you follow him? Following is simply impossible. You can only go within yourself. You can understand a living buddha, you can absorb his energy; you can hear his song, you can understand his silence; you can be filled by his presence -- but this is not following. This is simply the alchemy of being with a master. You can simply disappear in the silences of the master. But you are not following footprints; you are going within yourself, you have your own path from the circumference to the center.

Now comes the time for Sardar Gurudayal Singh. The poor fellow has to wait so long, and he brings his rainbow turban with such care. He used to be just an old hippie. Suddenly

he has become a mini-guru! And he is enjoying it so much, and directing many.... This is called transformation.

Ronald Reagan and George Bush go hiking together in the Montana mountains. They have been walking all day, discussing the forthcoming presidential election, and Ronald is giving George lots of advice about how to wear his make-up and look good on TV.
Suddenly they look up and see a huge grizzly bear coming over the hill towards them. Immediately, Bush reaches into his pack and pulls out a pair of running shoes. Then he starts taking off his hiking boots, and putting on the sneakers.
"Hey," says Ronald, nervously. "You don't think you can outrun that grizzly bear, do you?"
"I don't have to," says Bush, with a grin. "I just have to outrun you!"

Kowalski is returning home from a morning's hunting, with his shotgun in one hand and his hunting bag slung over his shoulder.
His friend, Slobovski, sees him across the road and calls out, "Hi, Kowalski! Been hunting?"
"That's right," replies Kowalski. "Been hunting ducks."
"Far out!" says Slobovski. "How many did you get?"
"Well," replies Kowalski, "if you can guess how many ducks I've got in my bag -- I'll give you them both!"
"Ah!" says Slobovski, scratching his head. "Three?"

Harry and Harriet are a very devoutly religious couple. They observe all the Christian religious festivals by remaining strictly celibate until the festival is over. During Lent, which lasts for a whole month, they decide to give up sex. They are especially careful -- they even sleep in separate rooms, to make sure they won't be tempted.

Lent finishes at six o'clock in the morning on Sunday, and sure enough, at exactly six o'clock, Harriet hears a sharp knocking on her bedroom door.
"Is that you, Harry?" asks Harriet.
"Yes!" he cries. "This is your ever-loving husband!"
"Ah, Harry!" giggles Harriet. "I know why you are knocking!"
"You know why I am knocking!" cries Harry, "but you should see with what!"

... This joke was given to me; somebody must have made it up. And when Nirvano told me about the joke, the person had made it a Jaina couple. The husband's name was Halvabhai and the wife's name was Mevabhai. And the Jainas have a religious festival, Paryushan, so the festival in the joke was Paryushan. The rest of the joke has remained the same.
But as I told Nirvano, jokes have their roots. You cannot change their context. Now, a Jaina couple will not be fitting. About Jews you can tell any kind of joke; their appetite is big enough, everything fits. But about Hindus, about Jainas, about Buddhists, you cannot just change the names. They will be absolutely unfitting, because they will not have any natural context.

India has no jokes of its own. All the jokes are imported -- fortunately there is no taxation on importing jokes! You can just change the names to Indian names, but it will not be right; it will not sound right. Even a joke has a certain context, a certain reference. It is not just a joke. You cannot implant it anywhere you like, it has a climate of its own. For example, a Jewish joke cannot be transplanted to another race because that joke has a history of its own. Nobody writes jokes, you know. There are no joke writers. From where do jokes come? From the wisdom of the folk, hundreds of years... they pass through many hands, many situations and then they come to a refinement. Nobody can claim that he is the writer. And never try to change the names, because they will look absolutely out of context.

If you cannot find out to whom the joke should belong, just put some Jewish names in it. They are the only people rich enough, and it is for a particular reason that they can absorb any joke. They have suffered so much since Moses brought them out of Egypt in search of Israel. Their whole life for these four thousand years has been that of suffering and suffering and suffering.

I have heard about an old Jew dying, praying to God. His family was surprised at what he was saying. He was saying to God, "God, enough is enough! Now you should choose somebody else as your chosen people."

This stupid idea that Jews are the chosen people has been the cause of all their suffering. But suffering has to be somehow consoled -- some ointment for so many wounds. Jokes have grown in the Jewish context. They had to laugh; otherwise how to forget the agony? How to forget all the

suffering that they have passed through? They lost their land....

They have got it back just now, forty years ago; now it is a struggle to keep it. All around they are surrounded by the Mohammedans. And there is no way, I can't see any possibility of their survival there. It is the ugliest and most criminal act of American politicians to give them back Israel, which has been in the hands of Mohammedans. But it was a clever strategy. This way they could get rid of many Jews without killing them. They were doing exactly what Adolf Hitler did. He killed six million Jews because the problem was that if Jews are the chosen people, then who are the Germans? This was the conflict. Adolf Hitler thought that his people, the Nordic Germans, were the chosen people of God, and Jews would not agree to that. He finished off six million Jews.

America did the same, but in a more diplomatic way. After the second world war they gave the Jews Palestine, which was once Israel and had fallen into the hands of Mohammedans. For centuries, Jews had lived without any land of their own -- and I don't think there is any need. "Lands" should disappear, boundaries should disappear; everybody should be living on the planet. But because after the second world war Palestine was in the hands of America, Americans played a very ugly trick. They gave it back not to the Mohammedans, but to the Jews. It is true, it used to belong to the Jews centuries before. But now it had been in the hands of the Mohammedans for so long that even the name had changed. It was no longer called Israel, it had become Palestine. Under the enforcement of the Americans who were holding Palestine, they made it Israel.

Nations are not made like that. Now thousands of Jews from other countries, particularly America, have moved to Israel. And they are surrounded from all sides by Mohammedans. For forty years they have been continuously fighting and being killed.

This is the fundamentalist Christian mind, which played a very clever trick. And I cannot see any future for Israel. Any day America stops giving arms to them -- they are a small island, surrounded by millions of Mohammedans -- they will all be killed. But America played a game, forced the Jews, and the Jews thought that they were being favored by America. They had a great hope some day to have their own land, so they rushed there with all their money. And they are still sending money -- the other Jews who have remained behind -- so all their money is being destroyed in Israel.

Now they are in such a difficult position: neither can they go back -- they have brought everything they had -- nor can they see any future when they can live in peace. Every day it is continuous war, terrorists of all kinds; nobody is secure.

This situation is very rare. Four thousand years ago on some unfortunate day, Moses brought the Jews to Israel. Forty years it took him to find this barren land that he used to call "the holy land." He had to call it holy land, otherwise his followers would have killed him! In forty years' search in the desert, two thirds of the original members who had come with him had died. And he passed up Saudi Arabia and Iran -- Jews can never forgive him. If he had stopped at Saudi Arabia, they would have been the richest people in the world today. But at that time nobody

knew about the petrol or the oil, so it is not his fault. But one thing is certain, that he is not a great prophet. He could not see that just there, below the earth, there was so much petrol and oil. What kind of prophet...?

Then, finding that it was getting late -- he was now eighty, and the holy land seemed to be nowhere -- in utter desperation, he simply declared Israel, which is just a barren land, to be the holy place of God, the holy land. Just to satisfy his followers... although the followers were not very satisfied. Looking at the holy land they said, "My God! And we are the chosen people of God and this is the holy land?"

Moses escaped on the excuse that a small tribe of the Jews had got lost in the desert -- "So I am going to find them and bring them back." And he never came back. He found them -- they were here in Kashmir. And Kashmir looks like a holy land: it is so beautiful, incomparable to any place on the whole earth; its beauty is superb. If Moses had just brought all the Jews to Kashmir, they would have been satisfied: "We are certainly the chosen people of God and this is the holy land."

That one small tribe that had wandered away from the main caravan of the Jews found themselves in Kashmir, and they thought that they had arrived! They remained in Kashmir, and when Moses came -- his grave is in Kashmir -- he lived with them. It is a strange coincidence that Jesus also died in Kashmir, and both graves are at the same place.

Jesus never knew that he was a Christian. He was born a Jew, he lived as a Jew, he proclaimed himself as the last prophet of the Jews. And that was the reason that the Jews crucified him, because they did not want to accept a

donkey-riding carpenter's son as their last prophet. It was irritating.

So the resurrection is just a story. Jesus was brought down from the cross after six hours, because Jews observe Saturday as a holy day; no work is to be done. So on Friday evening -- it was only six hours that Jesus had been on the cross -- they had to bring him down before sunset, because that would be work.

And the Jewish cross is a very primitive, old type of mechanism. If you want to die you need to hang on it at least forty-eight hours. Within forty-eight hours you can change your mind; that's why nobody ever commits suicide on a Jewish cross, because who can maintain for forty-eight hours the idea of committing suicide? Just within one minute or two he will say, "Let us think it over again. What is the hurry? And anyway I am feeling hungry."

So after six hours -- Jesus was a young man, only thirty-three, robust and healthy -- he escaped. It was a pure conspiracy with the Roman governor. Judea was under the Roman empire. The Romans were not interested in Jews' problems, that Jesus is or is not the prophet. It was irrelevant to them. Pontius Pilate, the governor, had an interview with Jesus before the crucifixion to see whether this man needs to be crucified. He found that the man is absolutely innocent -- maybe a little nuisance, because he is just riding on the donkey, followed by twelve idiots who believe that he is the only begotten son of God, and he has promised those idiots, "You will have a special place in the kingdom of God."

Naturally, other Jews thought that this was very annoying and irritating. Everybody laughs at the whole thing -- "This

is your last prophet?" It is even suspected that his father was not his father.

After six hours Jesus was taken down, and the Roman governor and his soldiers were keeping guard on the cave in which he was put when he was brought down from the cross. He allowed Jesus' followers to take him out of Judea. No resurrection happened, because even death did not happen. He was perfectly alive; just a few days it took for healing his hands and feet which had been nailed.

Seeing the situation, any intelligent man will not go back to Judea. He also went in search of the one lost tribe and ended up in Kashmir. Moses died in Kashmir, and two thousand years later Jesus died there. Both their graves are together there. Neither Jews want to recognize it nor Christians want to recognize it, but it is so evident: on both the graves the writing is in Hebrew, and on both the gravestones the names of the persons, Moses and Jesus, are engraved. The family that protects the graves is still Jewish; that is the only family in the whole of Kashmir which Mohammedans did not convert to Mohammedanism. All other Jews were forced to become Mohammedans, but this family they left alone because they were protecting and taking care of Moses' and Jesus' graves, and because Mohammedanism also accepts Moses and Jesus as prophets. So this family is the only family. But no pope goes there to look at poor Jesus' grave, and neither do Christians talk about it, nor do Jews ever bother what happened to Moses.

And Christians have no answer: even if Jesus was resurrected, he must have died sometime afterwards. Where

has he gone? Do they mean that he goes on resurrecting? Then he must be somewhere here!
Because of all this suffering, Jews have found a way of laughing, even in misery, and that way is the joke. The joke is purely a Jewish invention.
And you should never make any change of names, because just changing the names won't help. A Jaina couple... it is impossible for them to say what the joke says. "You know why I am knocking," cries Harry, "but you should see with what!" No Indian will say that. It is just impossible.
So I told Nirvano, "Change the names. Put in some Christian names"... because Jews are being hit so much. And I love them. Half of my sannyasins are Jews, and most of them are my sannyasins because I am the only person who loves Jewish jokes. They have a flavor which is their own. Countries like India are very serious. To tell a joke... Indians will feel very much hurt, they are such a repressed people. Here there are a few of my old friends who are Jainas. I told Nirvano, "Do you want them also to go?" Hearing the joke about Halvabhai and Mevabhai, then they are not going to stay!
The people who are translating my books from English to Hindi continuously send me notes: "What to do about the jokes?" And the people who are translating my Hindi books into English -- they again and again ask me, "What to do with the poetry?"
So I tell them, "If you can manage, translate the poetry into prose. If you cannot, then just leave it out." And to the people who are translating from English to Hindi I say simply, "You cannot do anything except leave out those jokes." Indians will get absolutely mad -- they are already

mad about me. Such a seriousness has been a long sickness, a wound that has not healed.

Jews have certainly proved their mettle. In all their agony they have maintained their laughter, they have not lost it. But it is a strange psychology that the people who are in suffering will always love laughter. That gives at least some time to forget the misery. People who have lived peacefully, with no suffering, don't know what laughter is.

I have been thinking many times that I should speak on the psychology of jokes. It has so many implications, why a certain joke is a joke and why it arose; who were the people, who must have been the people who managed that joke? In what background has the joke flowered, and was it refined? -- because it is centuries of work. A single joke can be traced back for centuries, and you will find little differences happening and finally it comes to perfection. It is a work of art. But it needs a certain climate and a certain understanding and a certain openness, a certain unrepressed joyfulness; otherwise it can backfire.

This is a beautiful joke -- but Nirvano is not a Jew. She thought it better to make it Christian because she knows the Christian names better and she knows the festival of Lent. In a Jewish context it would have been even better, because they are the most unrepressed people in the world. It is not a coincidence that Sigmund Freud -- a Jew -- started a new science: psychoanalysis. The whole science is against repression.

Every joke has a long history and background. It will be good sometime to give the whole series to Sardar Gurudayal Singh, and find the roots of these jokes -- their psychology, the people, because there are many people. For

example, Jews tell jokes about themselves; they are intelligent people. Other people tell jokes about the Polacks, who are very unintelligent people. They cannot make a joke themselves, that is impossible. But they are good in a way; they allow the whole world to make jokes about them. Nice guys!

Nivedano...

(Drumbeat)

(Gibberish)

Nivedano...

(Drumbeat)

Be silent. Close your eyes and feel your body to be completely frozen.
Now, look inwards.
Gather all your consciousness as a spear, piercing towards the very center of your being. Deeper and deeper, and you are bound to find the fire of life.
This fire does not burn, this fire is cool. This fire is like flowers. These flames are your eternal, divine sources.
At this moment you are the buddha.
Take care of the buddha twenty-four hours; cultivate the buddha twenty-four hours. Not for a single moment forget to remember your buddhahood.
As your remembrance deepens, as your awareness becomes clear, as you dissolve into your witnessing, the buddha

spontaneously arises -- in your actions, in your words, in your silences.
He becomes your whole life, and a life of great joy, a life of blessings, a life which is pure poetry, essential music, an eternal dance.
But keep the witness clear, because in your whole body only the witness is eternal; everything else is mortal. Sooner or later it will be in some grave. It has come from the earth, it will go back to the earth.
Only the witness will fly, without leaving its footprints in the blue sky, to become part of the cosmos.
Buddha is simply a name for your witnessing.

To make it clear,
Nivedano...

(Drumbeat)

Relax. Witness the body lying there almost dead. The mind is there -- maybe chattering a little bit -- but you are not it. You are simply a watcher.
In this moment you are at the greatest peak of your consciousness, and also the greatest depth.
Thousands of flowers are showering on you.
In this silence, in this serenity, the evening has become tremendously beautiful. Before Nivedano calls you back, collect as many flowers, as much fragrance, as much juice of your life as possible. And persuade the buddha to come with you. He has been hiding in the center for centuries -- bring him to the circumference, the world needs it.

This is the right moment for every buddha to come out. That is the only hope for the whole planet. If buddhas can come out to their circumference, in their daily activities, we can change the very fabric of human life on the earth. It can become a benediction.
Man has lived uncivilized for a single reason: he never went deep into himself.
I call only those people civilized who have reached their center, and who have seen themselves as buddhas.

Nivedano...

(Drumbeat)

Come back, but show even in your coming back the grace, the silence, the joy, the blissfulness of this moment.
Sit for a few moments, just to recollect the golden path you have traveled and the strange man, the buddha, that you have found -- not as a separate entity from you, but just as your innermost being, your very soul.

Okay, Maneesha?
Yes, Beloved Master.

Isan: No Footprints in the Blue Sky

Chapter #2

Chapter title: Inertia of habit
2 November 1988 pm in Gautam the Buddha Auditorium

OUR BELOVED MASTER,
ON ONE OCCASION, A MONK ASKED ISAN ABOUT THE NEED FOR CULTIVATION OF ONE'S SPIRITUAL LIFE AFTER ENLIGHTENMENT. ISAN RESPONDED THAT IT WAS NEEDED BECAUSE OF THE "INERTIA OF HABIT." HE THEN WENT ON TO SAY:
"WHAT YOU HEAR MUST FIRST BE ACCEPTED BY YOUR REASON; AND WHEN YOUR RATIONAL UNDERSTANDING IS DEEPENED AND SUBTILIZED IN AN INEFFABLE WAY, YOUR MIND WILL, OF ITS OWN SPONTANEITY, BECOME COMPREHENSIVE AND BRIGHT, NEVER TO RELAPSE INTO THE STATE OF DOUBT AND DELUSION. HOWEVER NUMEROUS AND VARIOUS THE SUBTLE TEACHINGS ARE, YOU KNOW INTUITIVELY HOW TO APPLY THEM -- IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE OCCASION.
"IN THIS WAY ONLY WILL YOU BE QUALIFIED TO SIT IN THE CHAIR AND WEAR YOUR ROBE AS A MASTER OF THE TRUE ART OF LIVING. TO SUM UP, IT IS OF PRIMARY IMPORTANCE TO KNOW THAT ULTIMATE REALITY, OR THE BEDROCK OF REASON, DOES NOT ADMIT OF A SINGLE SPECK OF DUST, WHILE IN INNUMERABLE DOORS AND PATHS OF ACTION NOT A SINGLE LAW OR THING IS TO BE ABANDONED."

Maneesha, it is one of the most important problems for any seeker, to understand a clear distinction between cultivation and enlightenment. You can cultivate enlightenment, but

that will be only phony. You may believe in it, but your belief cannot make it true. Even if the whole society supports it, it does not matter.

Truth needs no support; it has to be self-evident. And how can you cultivate enlightenment if you don't know it? You will simply imitate other enlightened ones. But every enlightened person has a unique character of his own. Nobody can be another Isan. However hard he tries to cultivate, imitates every action of Isan, every word, still he cannot be Isan. He will remain himself, only with a cultured, cultivated layer around his mind. It will remain a mind act, and certainly enlightenment is not a mind act. So nobody can cultivate enlightenment.

But after enlightenment...

Enlightenment happens suddenly. You can follow a device, with no guarantee that it will lead to enlightenment. But if you have a living master with you, watching step by step where you are moving, supporting you with one hand, as one of the Indian mystics, Gora, used to say... Gora was a potter, a very poor man, but he came to the same height as Gautam Buddha. His language, of course, was that of a potter. But sometimes the raw language of the villagers can express things which very sophisticated language cannot. Gora says that the master has to use both his hands, just like a potter. The potter hits the mud that he is turning into a pot from the outside with one hand, and from the inside with the other hand. His hits, his support, slowly create the pot.

The master has to use every possible way to bring you to the point where enlightenment is possible. Just a little push -- either of circumstances or by the master, or by the

disciple himself -- just a little turn. One step, and the old world is gone and you have entered into a new sky.
This is very sudden, because you were not preparing for it -- although for the master it is not sudden. He was preparing for it from every possible corner. Hitting you, shouting at you, being respectful to you -- in every possible way the master was bringing you to the brink from where you need to take one step more. That step only you can take; the master can bring you up to the brink.
It needs an articulate master. No ordinary master can do that; hence there are many mystics, but very few masters. To be a mystic is difficult in itself, but to bring the message to somebody else or to transform somebody else's consciousness towards mystic experiences, one needs many qualities -- an articulate way of giving an incentive to your longing, a reasonable approach, even making the irrational at least look rational, to turn even the absurd into a beautiful explanation. And to manage devices, meditations, from different corners of your being -- one never knows from which side, north or west, east or south, you are most vulnerable. But the master slowly, easily, becomes aware from which side you are most vulnerable. Then that side has to be hit as hard as possible, because the weakest link in your chains is going to give way first.
Your liberation, your enlightenment, is a tremendous artwork of the master. To find the weakest link in your chains, and to hit you in such a way that rather than being angry you feel grateful -- it is almost a miraculous alchemy. But as far as you are concerned, enlightenment happens suddenly. The master was preparing, step by step; but that

was in his consciousness, it was not part of your consciousness. To you, the door suddenly opens.

The master never declares that you have reached the door. He waits for the right moment: when you will be absolutely silent, utterly empty, the season comes on its own. And as you are maturing and ripening, the door is getting ready to open for you. But it is always a surprise to you, not to the master who has been preparing for years in different ways, bringing you to the point where you can disappear and evaporate.

After sudden enlightenment, a certain cultivation is needed because the sudden can become a glimpse. Your sleepiness is so deep, your unconsciousness is so vast that a sudden glimpse, a lightning... and again dark clouds have taken over. That beautiful moment will be remembered by you; you will start even doubting it: "Did it happen or did I imagine it? Was it a reality or a dream?" But the sweetness of it will remain with you. The fragrance of it will remain with you.

Cultivation after enlightenment simply means to avoid any situation that can destroy your glimpse. You have to pour your whole energy into the glimpse to make it more and more authentic, more and more deeply rooted in you, so that it becomes an indubitable truth. No clouds can destroy it and no sleepiness, no inertia is able to take it away from you. Isan's statement has to be understood in this light.

ON ONE OCCASION, A MONK ASKED ISAN ABOUT THE NEED FOR CULTIVATION OF ONE'S SPIRITUAL LIFE AFTER ENLIGHTENMENT. ISAN RESPONDED THAT IT WAS NEEDED BECAUSE OF THE "INERTIA OF HABIT."

That includes everything -- THE INERTIA OF HABIT.
George Gurdjieff, one of the most important men of this century, had a certain idea about the mind which no scientist has denied....
Every scientist knows that the mind is divided almost like a cross, in four parts. The right side is divided in two parts, the front and the back; and the same is true about the left side. Whatever we have done to look into the mind, we have not found any way to determine what the purpose is of the back sides. They seem to be absolutely unnecessary. But nature never produces anything unnecessary. And particularly the brain is existence's greatest creation; it will not contain unnecessary parts. The probability is that we have not yet discovered their functions.
When the researchers looked into the brain they found a strange thing: the right hand is connected with the left side of the brain and the left hand is connected with the right side of the brain. So when I am moving the right hand it is being directed by the left side of the brain.
The people who are born left-handed -- and their number is not small; it is ten percent of the whole population -- they are in a difficulty their whole life, because they are born in a right-handed society but with a left-handed personality. And nobody knows the deeper problems -- neither the parents nor the teachers. They force left-handed children to write with the right hand, just as everybody else is doing, not with the left hand. They are not aware what they are telling the child; neither can the child say anything against them. He can see that everybody is writing with the right hand, and it is strange that he writes with the left hand. But because of continuous enforcement, he tries the right hand.

It is not so easy, but continuous practice makes him capable of writing with the right hand. Only a very few people keep writing with their left hand. People who are left-handed and are writing with the right hand, are creating a great confusion in the mind.

The back of both sides of the brain, as far as we know, seems to be completely useless. But it is not. According to George Gurdjieff, who is the only one who has pointed out the fact, both of these back sides of the brain are a kind of robot. You learn something with the right hand; at first the front side of your left brain is active, but only in the process of learning. Once you have learned it, the front side delivers the learning to the back side. The back side is like a robot, or a computer. We don't see any function, but it goes on working without our knowing.

For example in Africa, one tribe has been found to eat only one time in twenty-four hours, and they are perfectly healthy. When they saw the Christian missionaries they could not believe it -- "What kind of idiots are these? Their whole concern is eating and eating and eating. First the breakfast, then the lunch, then the afternoon tea, then a coffee break. And it goes on!" Those simple people could not understand -- what is the point?

And the people of this tribe live longer, they are healthier; they live twice as long. If the average person here lives seventy years, in that small tribe he will live one hundred forty years or one hundred fifty years very easily. And even at the age of one hundred fifty he is not old; that tribe has known only young people dying. At the age of one hundred fifty he is functionally as young as any young man at the

age of thirty-five. But they have been habituated for millions of years to eating one meal a day.

If you are habituated in the American way, then one meal will kill you! What will you do the remaining twenty-four hours? The American eats five times, and in between cigarettes are needed, chewing gum is needed; somehow the mouth should continue to chew. They have become so accustomed, that even to take away somebody's chewing gum you have to hospitalize him because of the withdrawal effects! Chewing gum -- such a simple thing. In the first place you were doing something stupid and now you are talking about withdrawal effects! So something else has to be given in place of chewing gum; then something else, less addictive, and it takes a few weeks to get out of the habit.

The problem is, the habit goes into the back side of your brain, and we don't yet have any direct approach to the back side. The back side is still the unknown continent, and it controls everything. It freaks out if you drop any habit. It forces you to take the habit back.

I was staying in Calcutta with a friend, in the house of one of the richest men of India, Sohanlal Dugar. He is dead now. He must have been at that time seventy or seventy-five years old, and he told me, "I have renounced sex four times." The stupid man who was with me was very much impressed. When we were left alone the man said, "This is great -- four times!"

I said, "You are an idiot. You don't understand: you can renounce sex only once. How can you renounce it four times?"

Then he said, "Yes, that is right. If you have renounced once, you have renounced."
I said, "Let Sohanlal come back and I am going to ask what happened the fifth time."
I asked him when he came back, "You were telling us about your celibacy, that you tried four times, and my friend is very much impressed. So I am asking you, what happened to the fifth time?"
He said, "It is a disaster. The fifth time I did not renounce it, because four times I have already failed and learned the lesson that there is no point in renouncing; it is better to keep silent about it."
That's why everybody in the world is silent about sex. Particularly the celibates are absolutely silent because they know the problem, how many times they have renounced and it comes back again. It is not in your control and it is not your personal habit. It comes with your very birth, it is a biological habit.
So, there are many kinds of habits. A few habits you can drop, but a few habits are very deeply rooted. And to remain ignorant and unconscious is a very long, millions of years old, habit. If you allow it just a single moment, it will take you over.
Enlightenment is a very new phenomenon, and there is everything against it: your whole old mind, your unconsciousness, your tendency to forget. The English word `sin' originally meant forgetfulness, but the priests destroyed the beauty of the word. Forgetfulness is certainly a sin -- not against anybody, against yourself. But you have remained forgetful so long -- it is not chewing gum, that within four weeks you will drop it. And it is such a

consolation to remain in forgetfulness: it is cozy, it does not create an eternal quest, a search for the truth. It does not take you on dangerous paths. It keeps you mundane and ordinary, a part of the crowd, very happy in stupid things. Just watch people celebrating marriages, and everybody knows what is going to be the outcome! Everywhere, all around, there are ruins and wrecks of marriages; still, idiots will sit on horses, will wear a turban. Once they used to carry a sword, but now it is a shorter version, a small knife. What is all this hullaballoo? -- the bands, and people are singing, and a festivity, celebration. Two people, one man and one woman, are being hanged and all these fools are celebrating. And they are also enjoying: for the first time, and perhaps the last time, they are sitting on a horse like a king, with a crown and if not a real sword, then just a vegetable-cutting knife.

Such a drama, and the ultimate result? Then nobody bothers about you. All those who had gathered to celebrate your crucifixion... nobody comes for the resurrection. Then you work it out, it is your problem. And everybody must have noticed: all the old stories end up with the marriage; they don't go any further. All the old stories say, "They got married and lived in happiness afterwards" -- that is the finishing touch, as if both have died -- because to get into what happens after marriage, the intricate and complex problems, is dangerous.

In India, or anywhere else, tragedy in the movies or in the novels is loved more than comedy. Comedy seems to be not related to life at all, but tragedy -- that is everybody's experience. Everybody knows the taste of it.

Enlightenment, first as a glimpse, has to be protected from all your miserable habits, old patterns of behavior, unconscious ways of doing things like a robot. This is what cultivation is. You are fighting against a very long past which has known only a dark night, not even a star. And suddenly you have come to have a glimpse of the dawn, and heard the songs of the birds, and smelled the fragrance of the opening flowers. In the first place, you cannot believe that this can be true -- perhaps you are dreaming. Your whole experience is of a dark night; you have never thought that this dark night was going to end at any time. It seems to become darker and darker and darker. You have never understood the logic, that the darker the night becomes, the closer comes the dawn. But the dawn is unbelievable when it comes for the first time.

And the dawn I am talking about, and Isan is talking about, is not something outside you. All your patterns, old habits, are also inside. They will try to destroy the new inside that is growing, and is fragile, and your old habits are like stones, hard and heavy. The fight is between a rose and a stone. It is a difficult problem to protect the rose against all the rocks that you have grown in the past.

To experience the first glimpse is not very difficult. The real difficulty begins after the glimpse: How to save it? How to make it so true, and so deeply rooted, and so strong, that nothing can destroy it, that no doubt can arise about it, that its truth becomes self-evident? You have to live it; that is the only way to cultivate it.

How have you cultivated your habits? Just by living them. If you have not lived a certain habit, you cannot see why somebody else cannot leave it. You laugh at chewing gum

because you have not become habituated to it; you laugh about smoking because you have not become habituated to it; or alcohol... each goes deeper, transforms your chemistry and biology, becomes a deep hunger in you. In spite of you, you have to drink alcohol; you don't want to, but what to do? When the time comes the urge is so strong, every cell of your body is asking for it. And you think, "Perhaps one time more will not do much harm."

But this goes on for years -- "one time more." But the next time also, the same situation will arise. One needs to have courage to cut any habit with a sword, in a single blow. And whatever the withdrawal symptoms, it is better to suffer them for two or three weeks than to be defeated by your habits.

A man who is not a master of his own habits cannot remain enlightened. Even if he is fortunate enough to have a glimpse, that glimpse will make him even more miserable, because now he knows what is possible. Now he knows where he can reach, now he knows what is his potential. But he has to live in the darkness of his old habits and he cannot get out of the pattern.

Cultivation is the only way. Don't think of enlightenment just as an inner experience. In the beginning it is an inner experience -- then slowly bring it into your outer life. That's what I have been telling you every day, that whatever you experience, don't think the work is finished. The experience that happens in meditation has to be present in your day-to-day affairs.

Whether you are a housewife cooking, or you are working in an office, or in a shop -- any kind of life you are living, your meditation has to be staying alert in every activity.

This is what cultivation is. The more you live it, the more it becomes a normal experience; the more you live it, the less is the possibility of it being taken away by old habits. They will come like floods, but you have to remember one thing: that a small flame of a candle is enough to destroy the darkness of millions of years. The darkness cannot say to the candle, "You are too small, don't be foolish; against a darkness millions of years old you are trying to fight? You have some nerve!"

Nothing of that kind of dialogue ever happens. The small flame... and the darkness disappears, however old. Your glimpse of first enlightenment -- in Japan they call it satori -- is strong. It may be fragile, it may be new. It will be difficult to protect it, but it has a strength of its own. If you support it totally, it is going to take over your whole being. Satori is going to become samadhi.

Satori is the first glimpse of samadhi, and samadhi is when your whole being is afire. You don't have to remember, you are it. But this is possible only if you cultivate it in all your day-to-day affairs.

ISAN RESPONDED THAT IT WAS NEEDED BECAUSE OF THE "INERTIA OF HABIT." The cultivation in your day-to-day life is needed because of the inertia of habit.

HE THEN WENT ON TO SAY: "WHAT YOU HEAR MUST FIRST BE ACCEPTED BY YOUR REASON." Whatever you have seen inside, first you should make it part of your reason. It should not be put aside as an irrational, absurd episode. Isan is saying that if you think about it as irrational, doubts are bound to arise. So the first

thing is that you should make it in tune, in synchronicity with your rationality. You will not be able to protect something absurd -- and in fact it is absurd. The very experience is beyond reason; it happens when there is no mind.

So the first cultivation is to bring it closer to the mind. First you have made every effort to go away from the mind -- now bring your enlightenment closer to the mind. Make it acceptable to the mind so that the mind becomes a friend rather than an enemy in the long fight between your inertia and enlightenment. Now, make the mind your ally.

WHAT YOU HEAR MUST FIRST BE ACCEPTED BY YOUR REASON; AND WHEN YOUR RATIONAL UNDERSTANDING IS DEEPENED AND SUBTILIZED IN AN INEFFABLE WAY, YOUR MIND WILL, OF ITS OWN SPONTANEITY, BECOME COMPREHENSIVE AND BRIGHT, NEVER TO RELAPSE INTO THE STATE OF DOUBT AND DELUSION.

A very practical and scientific man -- nobody else has said it so clearly. The first experience is beyond mind. Now, the problem is that mind will try to create all kinds of doubts. Mind is full of your habits, and your new enlightenment is like a stranger who has suddenly arrived with new habits, with new directions, with a new lifestyle -- it wants to change everything in you. Obviously, your old personality and your old mind are going to give a good fight.

Isan shows a tremendous pragmatic insight. He says, the best way to avoid the fight is to bring the enlightenment closer to your reason. How can you bring it closer to your reason? If you start living according to your enlightenment, the mind at first will be unwilling, reluctant, resistant -- but

soon it will see that the way of enlightenment is far superior to the old, unconscious lifestyle. Mind is intelligent enough to recognize this. But this recognition will be possible only if the mind can see it working, can see that enlightenment works better in love, in friendship, in life -- that everywhere it brings a better result. The mind will soon be willing to accept it as a better way of life. Once mind accepts enlightenment as a better way of life, you have destroyed the greatest enemy. Then mind also starts using the insights of enlightenment and is willing to change itself. Once the mind is convinced that enlightenment gives you a better life, a more refined, graceful life, a more blissful life... that it changes everything, that it makes your touch a golden touch, that whatever you touch becomes gold... mind is intelligent enough to see, and to choose. Which is better: the old unconscious life, or the new conscious life?

This is the only way of making a RATIONAL UNDERSTANDING DEEPENED AND SUBTILIZED IN AN INEFFABLE WAY, so YOUR MIND WILL, OF ITS OWN SPONTANEITY, BECOME COMPREHENSIVE AND BRIGHT.

If the mind accepts rather than fighting, if it accepts a friendship with enlightenment, it will be filled with light, with more joy, with more blissfulness, with more ecstasy. It will be flooded with so many treasures that it cannot fight against enlightenment.

Inside you there is going to be a fight, finally: to choose the path of light, or to remain on the path of darkness. There is a point of departure. Mind has to be allowed to have a chance to see how enlightenment functions in transforming

your actions, your being, how it brings more joy to life, more songs to life, more flowers to life, more dances to life. That is the only argument to persuade the mind to accept that enlightenment has a tremendous value. There is no need to fight; a friendship is valuable. Once mind has become friendly to the stranger, you can be comfortable and at ease. There is going to be no fight anymore. Mind itself will bring more and more of enlightenment into functioning; this will become its own work.

HOWEVER NUMEROUS AND VARIOUS THE SUBTLE TEACHINGS ARE, YOU KNOW INTUITIVELY HOW TO APPLY THEM -- IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE OCCASION.

Once mind is a friend to your enlightenment, once it has seen the glory and the splendor in becoming friendly -- because in becoming friendly that splendor and glory is reflected in the mind too -- your intelligence will grow. Everything in you will start moving to a higher point. Once this synchronicity has happened, then mind knows intuitively how to respond to any occasion in accordance with enlightenment. Remember always one thing, that you will choose the better.

I have heard about a beggar who was the laughingstock of a whole village. The village was a tourist center because of its very ancient ruins, palaces, forts. And that beggar was also one of the special attractions -- the guides who used to take the tourists around would always take them to see the beggar, too.

They would say, "You will have to see this strange phenomenon: you just show him a rupee and a paisa, one in each hand, and tell him, `You can choose either.'"
They said, "But we don't see... what is the miracle in that?"
The guide would say, "You try it! You will see the miracle."
So people tried -- the beggar would always choose the paisa. And then everybody would laugh, and they would say, "Strange! -- can't this beggar understand that he is choosing a paisa against a rupee?" Then others would take the chance, and that was the beggar's whole work during the day, to choose the paisa against the rupee.
One day a very curious man saw all this happening. He remained behind after the tourists were gone; he went to the beggar and he said, "I can see that you are not an idiot. You are very intelligent. But why do you choose the paisa?"
He said, "Because of my intelligence! Once I choose the rupee, the game will stop. The game is continuing every day, for years...."
Then the man became aware of the greatness of his intelligence. "He is right: if he chooses the rupee, then the game is finished. Then the guide will not bring anybody, and nobody will try to test his intelligence. They enjoy..."
And the beggar said, "I also enjoy their stupidity! My daily income is nearabout ten to twelve rupees average. But it is because I continue to choose something which nobody expects. Even the retarded person will choose the rupee -- but because I am doing something absurd, they laugh and they enjoy. I also laugh, but I don't show it. I laugh when everybody is gone."

Whatever mind you have -- it is capable to see the fact that enlightenment brings a tremendous treasure to all your actions, a beauty to whatever you do, a joy that remains like an aroma around you. The mind is absolutely capable of understanding this. And once the mind has understood it, it is no longer an enemy; it dissolves itself into the tremendous phenomenon of enlightenment. That is the right action on the part of the mind, but it can happen only in a certain way: you have to give the mind a chance to see the effects of enlightenment.

IN THIS WAY ONLY WILL YOU BE QUALIFIED TO SIT IN THE CHAIR AND WEAR YOUR ROBE AS A MASTER OF THE TRUE ART OF LIVING. TO SUM UP, IT IS OF PRIMARY IMPORTANCE TO KNOW THAT ULTIMATE REALITY, OR THE BEDROCK OF REASON, DOES NOT ADMIT OF A SINGLE SPECK OF DUST, WHILE IN INNUMERABLE DOORS AND PATHS OF ACTION NOT A SINGLE LAW OR THING IS TO BE ABANDONED.

A man of enlightenment who has come to an agreement with the mind and the body... which happens almost simultaneously, because the body follows the mind. As the mind accepts enlightenment, the body accepts it also -- it happens simultaneously. Once it has happened, "There is not a single thing," Isan says, "to be abandoned in life." You can transform anything you want, but the idea of abandoning things is of the old mind, of the escapist, so-called religious people -- "Abandon this, abandon that; abandon the whole of life...." That is not a very courageous way; that is the way of a coward. And all the religions have been teaching the way of the coward.

I teach you the way of the courageous, the way of the lion. Remain in the world. Don't abandon anything, transform it. If something is poisonous, you don't have to drop it; it will drop the moment you understand that it is poisonous. You will not have to make any effort. You will not abandon it; it will simply be dropped without any effort, and your life becomes more and more simple.
Sekiso wrote:
THE MOUNTAIN RANGE,
THE WATER, THE STONES,
ALL ARE STRANGE AND RARE.
THE BEAUTIFUL LANDSCAPE, AS WE KNOW,
BELONGS TO THOSE WHO ARE LIKE IT.

I will have to repeat it:
THE BEAUTIFUL LANDSCAPE, AS WE KNOW,
BELONGS TO THOSE WHO ARE LIKE IT.
THE UPPER WORLD, THE LOWER WORLD,
ORIGINALLY ARE ONE THING.
THERE IS NOT A BIT OF DUST;
THERE IS ONLY THIS STILL AND FULL
PERFECT ENLIGHTENMENT.

If you are enlightened, then there is no duality of this world and that world, of a lower world and a higher world, of a material world and a sacred and holy world. In the moment of perfect and full enlightenment, THERE IS NOT A BIT OF DUST. The mirror is so clean it reflects the whole in its totality. You become the truth, you become the beauty, you become the divine. There is not anything other than your vaster self. You lose your smaller self into the oceanic self,

into the self which is cosmic. Who is there to abandon what? One simply enters into the dance and disappears.

I have just remembered an old Chinese Zen story. I have loved it so much that each time I remember it I rejoice it immensely.

The emperor of China was a very great painter; he loved painting, and he used to call other painters to the palace every year to have an exhibition. When he had become very old, he declared, at one annual function, "Now I am very old and I want to see the most perfect painting in the world. I will provide space in the palace to the painter, and whatever he needs..."

So a few painters who thought they could create such a painting stayed in the palace. Somebody completed his painting in one month and brought it to the emperor. He had done well, but it was not the most perfect.

By and by three years passed, and only one painter remained. For three years he had been painting -- and he was not painting on canvas; he was painting on the wall of the palace where his room was allotted to him.

He had painted a beautiful forest... and a moonlit night, a small river, and a very small footpath going round and round around the trees and then disappearing in the forest.

After three years he came to the emperor and said, "Now you can come. Whatever I can do I have done. I think it is the most perfect painting in the world. So I invite Your Honor to come, and I don't ask any reward -- these three years were the most precious that I have lived. Just your seeing it is enough."

All the other painters had been painting for reward, and when you are painting out of some motivation, for some reward, your painting cannot be perfect. Your motivation will be the dust.

This painter said, "I am not at all interested in any reward; you have already given it to me. These three years I have lived such a beautiful life, day and night; nothing could be more than you have given me. Now just look at the painting so that I can go back home. My children, my wife, may be waiting for me."

The emperor went with him. Certainly this painter had done the greatest job. He became so interested that he asked the painter, "Where does this small path go, finally?"

The painter said, "I have never gone on it but if you are willing to come with me, we can go and see where it leads. This question has arisen in me also many times, `Where does this small path lead?'"

So the painter and the emperor both entered the path and disappeared behind the trees, and nothing has been heard about them since.

This story has always made me immensely happy. There is no returning from perfection, there is no going back. Perfection takes you and you disappear.

Question 1

Maneesha has asked:

OUR BELOVED MASTER,

IS THERE ANY RELATION BETWEEN AWARENESS AND THE INSTINCTIVE ALERTNESS MAN ONCE HAD TO RELY ON FOR HIS SURVIVAL?

There is a certain relationship. There is a physical, biological, instinctive wisdom. You are not aware of it, that your body is doing miracles every moment....

If for just six minutes a certain amount of oxygen does not reach the brain, the mind will dissolve. Those cells depend on oxygen. The body, waking or asleep, is continuously supplying that much oxygen, neither more nor less. Where the blood is needed, how much of it is needed -- the body is working it out, it is not dependent on you. How to transform your food into blood, into flesh, into bones, into nerves -- the body knows all the secrets.

Even our scientists are still far behind. To change bread into blood will be thought a great miracle! Jesus only changed water into wine, and it became a great miracle, and your body is changing thousands of things. What kinds of vitamins have to reach to certain places in the body -- the body does not ask you, it does not bother you at all. It has its own wisdom, and you should be respectful of this great wisdom.

Just as the body has its own wisdom -- it is called instinct -- your soul has its own wisdom. It is called intuition. Your mind is a borrowed thing; it has nothing like instinct or intuition. It is just a computer which goes on collecting all kinds of information. But it has tremendous power over you because it has all that you know. If it is erased you will be simply dumb, not knowing who you are, where you are going -- for what? What is the business?

Mind functions according to the knowledge it has gathered: it is a borrowed thing in you. The body functions according to nature -- and your consciousness functions according to nature. In the middle of these two is the mind, which

functions as a computer. It fills a great need. As a servant it is good; as a master it is dangerous.

Once the intuitiveness of your consciousness has started functioning, the mind immediately recognizes who is the master. Once it recognizes the master, it will be a very good servant, very efficient. Because it is only a mechanism, it can do miracles, but it needs a master to guide it. Without the master the mind starts thinking itself to be the master, and that creates problems. The mind is not a master. It has not even any natural wisdom of its own. Even the body is in a far better situation.

You have to bring enlightenment to your consciousness, and make it evident to the mind that it is a far better way of living. The body is always functioning naturally; only the mind sometimes tries to master the body. That's what all the religions have been telling you. All the scriptures are full of teachings on how to force the body into a certain discipline. Celibacy is a mind idea, the body knows nothing of it. And the mind cannot manage it, so the body goes into a repression, functions abnormally, becomes perverted. The body is very innocent. It is the mind -- the priest, the philosopher, the educator -- which tries to interfere in everything.

The enlightened man does not interfere, does not allow the mind to interfere in the body. You become a solid pillar of wisdom. Your body is already in tune with nature, and your mind has stopped interrupting. It has also fallen in tune with your higher consciousness, your enlightenment. Your whole being becomes a pure pillar of light.

This is the function of the whole Zen experiment on man: to turn him into a single whole, a pillar of wisdom.

Before you all become pillars of wisdom, a little foolishness for poor Sardar Gurudayal Singh -- just for his sake. He is again sitting there with that rainbow turban. Where did he get it? (THE MASTER TURNS IN SARDARJI'S DIRECTION AND CHUCKLES....) Yeah, that's great. That's great.

Maureen and Peggy, the wives of Paddy and Sean, are sitting in the Dainty Dandelion pub drinking wine coolers, when Maureen shakes her head and moans, "My husband is so ugly that if I want to make love to him, I have to put a bag over his head."
"That's nothing," says Peggy. "My husband is so ugly that when he was born, the doctor slapped his mother!"

Harold the Hippie is sitting around in his pad smoking a few dozen reefers and grooving to the television program "Daffy Duck" when the phone rings.
"Hullo," says Harold, completely stoned.
"This is the overseas international operator," says the voice on the other end. "I've got a long-distance, collect call from Mabel Beeks -- will you accept the charges?"
"Wow, man!" says Harold, puffing madly on his reefer. "This sounds like a bad connection -- Mabel who?"
"Mabel Beeks! Mabel Beeks!" shouts the operator.
"Ah, no, man," replies Harold, his eyes rolling around in his head. "Mabel is not here."
"No! No!" screams the operator. "Mabel Beeks is here! This is a long-distance call from Mabel Beeks...!"
"Really?" says Harold, completely confused. "Where the hell is Mabel Beeks?"

"No!" shouts the voice. "This is Mabel Beeks!"
"Hey, sorry," says Harold. "Mabel's not here."
"No! You idiot! This is Mabel Beeks!" cries the operator.
Then Mabel Beeks herself interrupts and says, "Never mind, operator. Let me try. Hello, this is Mabel Beeks -- is June there?"
"June?" cries Harold, scratching his head, and looking out the window. "I don't know where you are, but here it is still November!"

Big Leroy and Ruby get married and go to the Humping Hippo Honeymoon Hotel in Mexico. Ruby is a virgin and she is very worried about the size of Big Leroy's machinery.
"Don't worry, baby," comforts Leroy. "I will just show it to you a bit at a time, so it doesn't scare you."
"Okay, precious," says Ruby, shyly. "Now you go outside and wait in the hallway, while I get undressed and ready for bed."
A few minutes later, Ruby is tucked under the sheets in the bridal bed. "Come on in honey!" she cries nervously. "I'm ready!"
"Now, sweetheart," says Big Leroy, from the hallway, "before I come in, I'm going to poke my prick around the bedroom door, bit by bit, just so you can get used to the idea."
Leroy pushes the head of his machinery inside the doorway.
"Are you scared, darling?" he asks.
"No, baby," replies Ruby. "I'm not scared."
So Leroy pushes another two inches inside the doorway.

"Are you scared now, sugar-pie?" asks Leroy.
"No, honey, I'm not," replies Ruby, wide-eyed.
Then Leroy pushes another six inches through the open doorway.
"Are you scared now, sweetie?" he asks.
"No, baby-cake," replies Ruby, "I'm not scared. You can come to bed now!"
"Okay, then!" cries Leroy, "I'm coming up the stairs!"

Nivedano...

(Drumbeat)

(Gibberish)

Nivedano...

(Drumbeat)

Be silent. Close your eyes, feel your body to be frozen, completely frozen.
Now look inwards. You have to reach to the center of your being. Collect all your consciousness, your whole life energy, like a spear piercing towards the center of your being.
At the very center you are a buddha. Your only quality at the center is witnessing, watching, awareness.
As your insight deepens, suddenly the whole universe starts rejoicing with you because your center is also the center of the whole cosmos. At your very center you are a buddha.
And from this moment onwards you have to persuade the

buddha to come to your daily activities -- not remain hidden inside, but come to the surface, to the circumference, to actions, to words, to silences....
To know the buddha is to know your eternal being; to know the buddha is to know your disappearance. Here you disappear -- and suddenly the buddha appears.
Everyone is pregnant with the buddha.
This silence, this tremendously beautiful serenity... you are fortunate to be here. Nowhere else in the world are thousands of people trying to discover their hidden splendor.

To make this golden space more clear to you, Nivedano...

(Drumbeat)

Relax. But remain a witness. The body is lying there as an object, the mind is there as an object. You are the witness. You are neither the mind, nor the body. You are a pure consciousness. This pure consciousness we have been calling the buddha. The buddha is only a symbol.
So many flowers have blossomed, so much fragrance... all boundaries have disappeared and the Buddha Auditorium has become a lake of consciousnesses without any ripples. You have to bring all this fragrance with you, all these flowers with you.
Now I have brought the Buddha statue, just in front of the Buddha Auditorium. He is waiting there. When you pass by, remember: he was also one day just a human being, as you are. Pay your respects; pay your gratitude, because this

man alone introduced the world to a new dimension -- of beautitude, of truth, of dignity. This man alone declared that man is God, and other than man there is no god. This was the greatest revolutionary statement ever made.

Nivedano...

(Drumbeat)
Come back, but with the same gesture of peace, silence and grace. Bring the buddha with you. Sit for a few moments silently, reminding yourself of your potential, and the glimpse, the center and the silence. Remember the beauty of eternity in the moment and the encounter with your buddha.
You have brought a few invisible flowers; while going out of the Buddha Auditorium you can shower Buddha with flowers in gratitude.
At this moment you have become his contemporary. I want to make everyone in the world a contemporary of Buddha. This is the only possibility for humanity to survive on a higher plane.
You are not working only for yourself, you are also working for the survival of this beautiful earth.

Okay, Maneesha?
Yes, Beloved Master.

Isan: No Footprints in the Blue Sky

Chapter #3
Chapter title: Start witnessing

3 November 1988 pm in Gautam the Buddha Auditorium

OUR BELOVED MASTER,
ON ONE OCCASION, A MONK CAME TO ISAN'S MONASTERY TO BE TAUGHT, AND, SEEING HIM, ISAN MADE AS IF TO GET UP. "PLEASE DON'T STAND UP!" EXCLAIMED THE MONK.
"I HAVEN'T SAT DOWN YET!" SAID ISAN.
"I HAVEN'T BOWED YET," THE MONK SAID.
"YOU RUDE CREATURE!" COMMENTED ISAN.
ON ANOTHER OCCASION, ISAN WAS WATCHING A BRUSH FIRE, AND ASKED HIS DISCIPLE, DOGO, "DO YOU SEE THE FIRE?"
"I SEE IT," REPLIED DOGO.
THE MASTER ASKED DOGO, "WHERE DOES THE FIRE COME FROM?"
DOGO SAID, "I WOULD LIKE YOU TO ASK ME SOMETHING THAT HAS NOTHING TO DO WITH WALKING AROUND OR ZAZEN OR LYING DOWN" -- AT WHICH ISAN LEFT OFF TALKING AND WENT AWAY.
ONCE, ISAN WAS ASKED BY ICHU TO COMPOSE A GATHA FOR HIM. ISAN REPLIED: "IT IS FOOLISH TO COMPOSE ONE WHEN FACE TO FACE -- AND, IN ANY CASE, WRITING THINGS ON PAPER!"
SO ICHU WENT TO KYOZAN, A DISCIPLE OF ISAN, AND MADE THE SAME REQUEST.
IN RESPONSE, KYOZAN DREW A CIRCLE ON PAPER AND WROTE A NOTE NEXT TO IT THAT SAID: "TO THINK AND THEN KNOW IS THE

SECOND GRADE. NOT TO THINK AND THEN KNOW IS THE THIRD GRADE."

Maneesha, before discussing your sutras, a little biographical note on Isan is essential. I say it is essential because unless you understand the man, his background, his upbringing, his qualities, you will not be able to grasp just the pure sutras. They are almost writings in the air, or, if you prefer, in the water. The man who has written the sutras or told the sutras, or managed these anecdotes, has to be understood to understand all that is connected with him, because his whole being covers and colors whatever he says. You cannot take it out of context.

Isan is a totally different personality than Bodhidharma. Bodhidharma was a hard master; Isan was very polite. Naturally his politeness would affect whatever happened around him. He was a very humble person, never tried to convert anybody, but on the contrary slipped deep down into the forest, so nobody came to him. He felt it a little embarrassing to be the master and degrade somebody as a follower -- a very nice, very delicate personality, the personality of a poet, of a singer, of a dancer.

ISAN WAS A MELLOW AND PATIENT MASTER IN GUIDING HIS DISCIPLES TO ATTAIN THEIR ENLIGHTENMENT.

He never used shouting or hitting or beating; that was not possible for him. He was such a loving, compassionate being that to think of him hitting the way Zen masters hit is impossible. He was very humble; hence he had to create

absolutely different devices than those of Bodhidharma or Nansen.

ISAN WAS A MELLOW AND PATIENT MASTER IN GUIDING HIS DISCIPLES TO ATTAIN THEIR ENLIGHTENMENT. UNLIKE THOSE ZEN MASTERS WHO PRECEDED HIM, HE DID NOT USE THE STICK OR SHOUT.

HOWEVER, HIS MILDNESS OF MANNER WAS ONLY A VENEER FOR THE ICONOCLAST AND REBEL WITHIN.

You should not understand that his humbleness was not a rebellious quality. You should not think that his humbleness made him compromise with the past and the traditions. He remained a great rebel against all that goes towards preventing a person's enlightenment.

So his mildness of manner was only a veneer, just a cover for the iconoclast and rebel within. Deep down he was fire. On the surface he was very polite. Those who came to him because of his politeness -- because there were many who were afraid of the Zen masters who would beat, who would hit, who would suddenly jump on you; their behavior looked so irrational. Isan looked very good compared to the other predecessors. Although he never was interested in people, still in the deepest forest one thousand disciples had gathered, and they had come from such faraway places just because they had heard that Isan was not a man to hit or slap. He was so mild and so humble and so loving....

But this was only a veneer. Inside there was glowing fire. Once you had come close to him, because of his humbleness, because of his very friendly behavior, you were caught in the net. As you would come closer, you

would know the fiery nature of his being -- but it was too late to go back. You had fallen in love with the man. Now whatever happens, if you have to pass through this fire, you will pass through this fire.

Maneesha has brought one anecdote:

OUR BELOVED MASTER,

ON ONE OCCASION, A MONK CAME TO ISAN'S MONASTERY TO BE TAUGHT, AND, SEEING HIM, ISAN MADE AS IF TO GET UP.

"PLEASE DON'T STAND UP!" EXCLAIMED THE MONK.

"I HAVE NOT SAT DOWN YET!" SAID ISAN.

When you are in the middle, it is very difficult to say whether you are going to sit down or you are going to get up.

Mulla Nasruddin used to suggest to his followers that if you don't want to be bored by anybody, just take your umbrella and stand in the door.

If the fellow is alright and you would like to welcome him, you can say, "You came at the right time; I was just coming in." And if the fellow is a bore, you can say, "Excuse me, you came at a wrong time. I am going out." But just standing at the door with the umbrella, now it is very difficult to decide where the man is going, whether in or out. He is standing in the door, in the middle.

The same was the position: the man has come TO BE TAUGHT, AND SEEING HIM, ISAN MADE AS IF TO GET UP. It was a strategy to know his response, how the other man will behave. Isan was not getting up; he just made as if he was going to get up.

"PLEASE DON'T STAND UP!" Because you stand up to give honor to someone, the man naturally thought that Isan was going to honor him by standing. "PLEASE DON'T STAND UP!" EXCLAIMED THE MONK.

But such was the subtle way of Isan to know about the inner mind of man. This man looks perfectly right in saying, "PLEASE DON'T STAND UP!" But on what grounds has he assumed that Isan should be standing up to welcome him?

"I HAVEN'T SAT DOWN YET!" SAID ISAN. "What about standing up? -- I was just going to sit down. Why did you assume...?"

Perhaps that assumption is a deep expectation that he should be honored. Perhaps it is unconscious, but Isan has brought it to the surface. The man could have thought that Isan was going to sit down. He was in the middle -- both possibilities were available to him -- but the man had chosen the possibility that Isan was going to stand up. That shows his mind -- a deep longing, a desire to be honored, although he has come only as a student to be taught.

Isan said, "I HAVEN'T SAT DOWN YET" -- the question of standing does not arise.

But the poor monk did not understand the subtle way: "I HAVEN'T BOWED YET," THE MONK SAID.

"YOU RUDE CREATURE!" COMMENTED ISAN.

Very strange encounters! When Isan said, "I HAVEN'T SAT DOWN YET!", that was the moment to bow down and touch his feet, and to offer himself for the discipline, for the meditation, for all his teachings.

Rather than taking that, he retorted -- he thought as if Isan was making a fool of him -- "I HAVEN'T BOWED YET," THE MONK SAID.
"YOU RUDE CREATURE!" COMMENTED ISAN. "This is not the way to be with me. You have to be grateful to be allowed to see me. Instead of it you are showing your ego."
"I HAVEN'T BOWED YET," he is saying. "Don't consider that I am your disciple or I am your student; I have not even bowed yet." And he has come to learn, but ego is such a subtle phenomenon that without your knowing, it immediately asserts. The ego simply retorted, "I HAVEN'T BOWED YET."
Now, this has to be understood. There are things which should not be said; the very moment you say them they lose all their grandeur, gratefulness. You have to behave in a way that shows your gratitude, not your words.
Bowing down is a gesture of saying, "I am ready. You can trust that I will not misuse the time that you will give me, or the meditation or any kind of discipline. I will not misuse it. I have come to you whole-heartedly." It is just a way, without words, of saying, "I am available."
But the man said instead, "I HAVEN'T BOWED YET."
As if a man like Isan is in need of your gratefulness! By being grateful to a person like Isan, you are not making him in any way richer; on the contrary, you are becoming richer. You are learning a new way, a new gesture and its significance.
In the West it never evolved that the disciple should touch the feet of the master, and even today the Western mind thinks it really strange -- one human being touching the feet of another human being. But they don't know the

significance of it, they don't know the esoteric significance of it.

When the disciple touches the feet of the master, it is not only what you see, something else is happening. When the disciple touches the feet, the master touches his head. A circle of energy is created that is not visible to the eyes -- because no energy is ever visible to you. You only see the gesture: one is touching the feet, the other is touching his head.

But the East, for at least ten thousand years, has come to know this secret way of approaching a master. And the master will put his hand on your head only if he feels your energy is worth it. By touching his feet... You should remember that energy moves only from the fingers of the hand or from the toes of the feet; energy moves from points which are dead ends. When somebody touches his feet, the master immediately recognizes the kind of energy. If he feels that the person has to be accepted, is worth being worked upon, then he touches his head, and with his hand he gives a taste of his energy, and then both energies become a circle. And if the circle becomes smooth great possibilities can happen.

But for the outsider it seems simply that one person is touching the feet of another person. The West has not been able, even today, to understand. Life is not what it appears from the outside; it is much more, immensely more, on the inside.

The man showed an egoistic pattern of his mind. That's why Isan had to comment, "YOU RUDE CREATURE!" He was not accepted as a disciple.

To be accepted as a disciple by a great master is not a small thing. In that very acceptance your enlightenment has come miles closer, your liberation has taken a tremendous quantum leap. You are just on the verge, ready, just because the master has accepted you. He accepts only when he sees the possibility, the vulnerability, the openness. It is an inner drama which is not visible to the eyes.

ON ANOTHER OCCASION, ISAN WAS WATCHING A BRUSH FIRE, AND ASKED HIS DISCIPLE, DOGO, "DO YOU SEE THE FIRE?"

Now, it will look strange -- the fire is there, Dogo, his disciple, is there, Isan is sitting there. There is no reason why Dogo should be asked, "DO YOU SEE THE FIRE?"

Replied Dogo, "I SEE IT."

THE MASTER ASKED DOGO, "WHERE DOES THE FIRE COME FROM?"

DOGO SAID, "I WOULD LIKE YOU TO ASK ME SOMETHING THAT HAS NOTHING TO DO WITH WALKING AROUND OR ZAZEN OR LYING DOWN" -- AT WHICH ISAN LEFT OFF TALKING AND WENT AWAY.

Dogo has closed all the doors. When Isan was asking, "DO YOU SEE THE FIRE?" he should have been alert. When you are with a master you have to be alert every moment. What he says must imply some greater significance which may not appear in the words.

Now, it is a strange question. They both are seeing the fire; but if the master asks, "DO YOU SEE THE FIRE?" he means many things which Dogo is missing. He means, "Are you here?" You can be seeing the fire and yet you

may be somewhere else and the fire may be just a faraway, faded thing. It may not be a living experience right now. If your mind is full of thoughts, you can even miss the fire, because who is going to see it? You have to be here -- that is the point that is hidden behind the question.
If Dogo had had the understanding he would have immediately thought that the question means his mind has moved somewhere else. He must have been thinking of other things, other worlds, other matters.

I have told you a story about two friends.
One morning they met. The first friend said, "You will not believe it: last night I had a dream I had gone fishing, and I caught such big fish that I had to carry one fish at a time. The whole night it continued. It was strange -- for years I have been fishing and I have never found such great fish. You should have seen what a joy it was."
The other man said, "That is nothing. Last night I dreamed that in my bedroom, in my bed itself, on one side was Marilyn Monroe, utterly naked, on the other side Sophia Loren, utterly naked. I was greatly shocked. I had never believed that this chance would arise in my lifetime."
The first friend said, "You idiot! Why did you not call me?"
The second man said, "I did call, but your wife said you had gone fishing!"

People seem to be somewhere, but their minds may be anywhere. To be in the moment is a clear-cut message of Zen.
Isan's asking Dogo, "DO YOU SEE THE FIRE?" certainly meant that Dogo was not there. He was just sitting there but

his mind had roamed away. It would have been right for him to say, "I don't see it, because I have gone into my thoughts somewhere else." But rather than telling the truth he said, "I SEE IT."

THE MASTER ASKED DOGO, "If you see it, can you tell me WHERE DOES THE FIRE COME FROM?" Now he is asking, from where do all things come -- the fire is only a symbol -- and where do they go finally? What is the source from which they arise and what is the point where they disappear?

To the meditator it becomes slowly clear that the source and the goal are one. The same point is the source; the energy moves in a circle, and comes back to the same point. You are at the same point both the times -- when you are born and when you die. You may have changed much meanwhile -- so much experience, so much knowledge -- that's why you miss the pure innocence of death. You missed the innocence of birth because of your ignorance, and you miss the innocence of death because of your knowledge.

Of course you were not expected to recognize innocence in your birth, you can be forgiven for that; you were not told or taught. The experience was so new, you could not name it even. But the man who dies full of knowledge again misses the innocence, because of his knowledgeability.

In mystic circles around the world it has been a long-standing understanding that unless a man is just like his birth-innocence when he dies, he missed the whole point and the whole dance of life, he missed the whole significance of life. He has taken a long route of seventy or

eighty years, and has come back to the source, but missed it again.

In India, the word for the experience of this circle, the word that is used is sansar. Sansar means both the world and the circle. The whole world is a circular experience. In the beginning you are innocent; you should be innocent at the end. Then your life has been a great life of love, of understanding, of many flowers, of many blessings. You have not lived insanely, you have lived intelligently, you have lived meditatively; you have lived out of silence, not out of anxiety, anguish, and thoughts.

A man is complete only when at the moment of his death he is again the same as he was when he was born, again a child -- the second childhood.

So when Dogo was asked by the master, "WHERE DOES THE FIRE COME FROM?" the fire was just an excuse. He was asking, "From where do things come and where do they go?"

But Dogo again missed. Rather than answering the question, DOGO SAID, "I WOULD LIKE YOU TO ASK ME SOMETHING THAT HAS NOTHING TO DO WITH WALKING AROUND OR ZAZEN OR LYING DOWN" -- AT WHICH ISAN LEFT OFF TALKING AND WENT AWAY.

Dogo has closed all the doors. He is saying, "You should ask me something which is not concerned with zazen -- that is intense meditation -- or a walking meditation, or a lying down meditation."

Buddha used all actions in life as an opportunity to meditate. Walking, you should walk meditatively, each step with full awareness. Lying down, you should lie down with

awareness, not just out of old habit. And zazen is the intense and urgent quality of meditativeness.

Dogo is saying to his master, who has asked, "WHERE DOES THE FIRE COME FROM?"... He has not answered the question because that question implies meditation. Only in meditation can you know that everything comes from the same source and goes back to the same eternity. Nothing ever dies, nothing ever is born; everything is, only forms go on changing. What was sometime before wood, is now fire; what is fire soon will be smoke.

These are the ways of disappearing into the ultimate reality. The fire was hidden, so long remained hidden in the tree. Now it has blossomed, just as flowers blossom; it has come out of the prison. A little dance, a little joyful life, and the fire will turn into smoke. Smoke will have a little joyful life, and slowly slowly will disappear into the eternal. This implies a meditative experience.

Rather than answering it, because only a meditator can answer from where the fire comes... Unless you know your own center, how can you answer from where your fire comes? Your life is a fire, and where does it go finally? Does it disappear outside or does it again relapse into the origin? Only the meditator has known the secrets of inner life. Life sometimes is dormant in the center and sometimes comes to the circumference, and when tired goes back to the center.

One of the greatest men in history was Patanjali, who created a whole science of yoga single-handed. It is very difficult to create a whole science alone. Five thousand years have passed and not a single word has been added, it has such a completion; neither has a single word been taken

out. The system is so complete in itself, there is no possibility to go beyond Patanjali as far as yoga is concerned.

But only people who will go deeper into themselves will know that they are carrying the source and the goal both at the same center. Everything comes from the same center of the universe and goes back finally into the same center.

But rather than answering the question -- perhaps he was not able to answer it -- on the contrary, he was closing all doors. He was saying, "I WOULD LIKE YOU TO ASK ME SOMETHING THAT HAS NOTHING TO DO WITH WALKING -- because in Zen monasteries there is a special place for walking meditation -- OR ZAZEN -- which is sitting meditation -- OR LYING DOWN."

These three meditations are followed by all meditators on the path of Zen. He is saying, "Leave these out and ask me something."

Now, Zen is not concerned with anything else. In fact, there have been cases when a new disciple comes to a master and the master almost always asks, "From where are you coming?" The authentic seeker will say, "I don't know. I have come to you to find out from where I am coming." This kind of disciple will be immediately accepted.

But instead of it he says, "From some town, some village..."

And the master asks, "How much is the price of rice in that village?"

And the person starts talking about the prices, not knowing that the master is trying to find out whether this man has the capacity, is made of the right stuff to be a meditator.

One Sufi mystic, Bayazid, went to his master for the first time. The master was staying in a mosque. Bayazid entered the mosque -- he was perfectly alone, as far as you could see -- but the master immediately said, "Keep the crowd out! You come alone, this is not a place for the crowd." Bayazid looked all around and said, "What crowd? There is no one here except me."

The master said, "Don't look around, look in. You have been carrying a whole crowd -- all the friends you have left behind, your wife, your children, your parents. They had all come to say good-bye to you at the boundary of the village, but they are still in your mind. I am talking about that crowd. Just go out, and until that crowd is gone don't come in."

It took one year for Bayazid. He remained sitting outside, watching his mind, waiting for the moment when the mind was empty. The moment he found, "Now the crowd is gone," he entered the mosque.

The master hugged him and told him, "My hands are small, I cannot hug a whole crowd. Now you have come alone, something is possible."

ONCE, ISAN WAS ASKED BY ICHU TO COMPOSE A GATHA FOR HIM.

Gatha means a poem. Ordinarily that question is not right; it is asked only at the time when the master is dying. The disciples ask as a memorial, "Just write down a small poem. Your last word, in your own handwriting, will be our greatest treasure." That last word is called gatha.

ISAN WAS ASKED BY ICHU TO COMPOSE A GATHA FOR HIM. That was so stupid a question, because Isan was not going to die.

ISAN REPLIED: "IT IS FOOLISH TO COMPOSE ONE WHEN FACE TO FACE. When I am face to face with you, read me, read my heart. A gatha is written when a master is dying because he will not be anymore available. It is so foolish to ask such a thing when we are face to face. Feel my presence. AND, IN ANY CASE, WRITING THINGS ON PAPER!"...

Isan is saying, "In the first place, it is foolish when I am present not to rejoice in my presence, not to dance with my presence, not to be ecstatic and drunk with my presence. And secondly, IN ANY CASE, WRITING THINGS ON PAPER! -- what will be their value? When you cannot understand the living master and his word, that dead paper, that dead ink -- what are you going to do with it?"

SO ICHU WENT TO KYOZAN, A DISCIPLE OF ISAN, AND MADE THE SAME REQUEST.

IN RESPONSE, KYOZAN DREW A CIRCLE ON PAPER AND WROTE A NOTE NEXT TO IT....

It is a beautiful note. He has not compiled a gatha, but he has responded in a different, unique way, in his own way. He has not composed a poem; on the contrary, he DREW A CIRCLE ON THE PAPER AND WROTE A NOTE NEXT TO IT THAT SAID: "TO THINK AND THEN KNOW IS THE SECOND GRADE. NOT TO THINK AND THEN KNOW IS THE THIRD GRADE."

He has left out the first grade because something has to be left for the disciple to find. What is the first grade? He says, "NOT TO THINK AND THEN KNOW IS THE THIRD

GRADE. TO THINK AND THEN KNOW IS THE SECOND GRADE."

But Ichu did not ask him, "What is the first grade?"

The first grade is just to know; no question of thinking or not thinking, but just to know.

The moment you enter into deep meditation you pass through many things: the thinking mind, the feeling heart. You come into a space where everything is empty, only witnessing has remained. That witnessing is the only authentic knowing; that is the first grade.

But Ichu went on missing. In all these sutras he could not make a single step deeper into the mystery of life, although every possibility was made available to him.

Soseki wrote:

DON'T ASK WHY THE PINE TREES
IN THE FRONT GARDEN
ARE GNARLED AND CROOKED.
THE STRAIGHTNESS
THEY WERE BORN WITH
IS RIGHT THERE INSIDE THEM.

It is a very significant statement. You see the tree -- a pine tree or any tree which is not straight for any reason. Circumstances may not have allowed it to be straight, or perhaps the gardener did not want it to be straight, but in the innermost being of the tree the possibility of being straight is still there.

All these poems are about you. Whatever the symbol -- the fire, or the pine tree -- these symbols don't matter; they simply give you an indication.

DON'T ASK WHY THE PINE TREES

IN THE FRONT GARDEN
ARE GNARLED AND CROOKED.
THE STRAIGHTNESS
THEY WERE BORN WITH
IS RIGHT THERE INSIDE THEM.

This is exactly the case with you all. Whatever you have become, however far you have gone from your natural potential, it does not matter. Your buddha remains within you. Your straightness remains within you. You can come back home any moment you decide with totality and utter urgency. Nothing can prevent you.

Question 1

Maneesha has asked:

OUR BELOVED MASTER,
LAST NIGHT I SAW FOR THE FIRST TIME THAT THE MIND NEED NOT BE INIMICAL TO MEDITATION. DOES WHAT YOU SAID ABOUT THE MIND ACCEPTING ENLIGHTENMENT ALSO APPLY TO ITS ACCEPTANCE BEFORE ENLIGHTENMENT, OF, FOR EXAMPLE, WITNESSING? CAN THE MIND ACKNOWLEDGE THAT WITNESSING IS OFTEN MORE USEFUL THAN THINKING, AND SO JUST STEP ASIDE IN THOSE MOMENTS WITHOUT THROWING A TANTRUM?

Maneesha, it is impossible. Enlightenment has to be first. As an experience mind can understand it, and seeing its gracefulness in action can become a friend to it. But before enlightenment mind can only believe, it cannot become a friend.

Mind can only believe that there is enlightenment. At the most the belief is possible -- but belief is of no use. The mind has to experience enlightenment in function, not as a belief but as activity. And the same is the case with witnessing: mind will always be against witnessing because it stops mind's long heritage of thinking. Mind is familiar with thinking; witnessing at the most can become a thought, but it cannot become an actuality.

You have to put mind aside to become a witness, and obviously mind resists it. Who wants to be put aside? -- and particularly from a place where the mind has been the master for centuries. And you want to put it aside for something that you don't know what it is? Mind will not allow you to remain a witness long.

You can try a small experiment. Just put your wristwatch in front of you and start looking at the second hand and remain watching and witnessing. You will be surprised: not even fifteen seconds have passed and you have fallen and forgotten that you are witnessing. Some other thoughts have come. Suddenly you will awaken after a few seconds: "My God, it was only fifteen seconds!" Not even sixty seconds -- one minute -- can you persist in witnessing. The force and the flood of mind is too big.

That's why an articulate master creates strange devices to put the mind aside without making it an enemy, because sooner or later, when you become enlightened, the same mind has to be used as a friend. It is a very useful mechanism. But in the beginning it is going to be against any effort to put it aside.

Meditation is nothing but putting the mind aside, putting the mind out of the way, and bringing a witnessing which is

always there but hidden underneath the mind. This witnessing will reach to your center, and once you have become enlightened, then there is no problem. Then bring the mind in tune with you. It is a great art. First you have to put the mind aside, then you have to bring the mind back again, but now it comes as a slave. It used to be the master before, so if you try before enlightenment, it is going to throw all kinds of tantrums. There is no need, because those tantrums will hinder your progress into witnessing. Just don't create the enemy.

Silently start witnessing, without making a direct attack on the mind. You have to be very careful to reach to the center. Mind will try in every way to take you away for a worldwide tour. And it allures, persuades you, gives you great promises: "Where are you going? What is there inside? The boyfriend is waiting outside the gate and you are going inside. The party is arranged in the Blue Diamond -- and who has ever heard of a party inside?"

The mind will create many kinds of things, but you have to very lovingly and carefully put it aside. Remember my words, lovingly and carefully. Don't hurt the mind, because the mind will be of much use after enlightenment. Before enlightenment it is your hindrance; after enlightenment it is an immensely complicated mechanism which can be used for all kinds of things. Then it is no more your enemy. Just the master has to be awakened, and once the mind sees the immense light inside you, it spontaneously falls in tune. There is no question of fighting. But before enlightenment the mind will give every fight if you are going to leave it behind or put it aside. This is simple psychology.

Gurdjieff used to say that in a class where the master has gone out, there is havoc. Children are shouting, jumping, fighting, doing whatsoever they always wanted to do, but because of the master... And then the master comes in and every child is sitting in his place looking into the book. That does not mean that he is reading; that simply means he is showing that he is occupied. There is silence.

Gurdjieff used to say that something almost similar happens when you become enlightened. The master comes in and the mind, seeing the master, suddenly recognizes what his position is. Before such a splendor he is reduced. At that moment you can make friends with the mind; he will be immensely happy to be of any service to the eternity that you have brought with you. But don't try it before enlightenment: then the mind is going to give you unnecessary trouble. The more you will fight with the mind, the more you will be engaged in mind rather than becoming a witness.

Witnessing is simply slipping out of the mind -- a very graceful way, because the moment you start witnessing the very thought process, you have slipped out without creating any fight. You are just watching the caravan of thoughts within you. You are no more part; you are standing aside, by the side of the road, and the traffic is passing. You are not in a fighting mood, you are not even judgmental. You don't say, "This is good and that is wrong." Whatever is passing, your whole work is just to see. Soon this silent seeing... and the mind is put aside.

It is witnessing that will take you to enlightenment. After enlightenment mind can be used, can be very significantly used. It is the greatest biological evolution. It has not to be

thrown away in the wastepaper basket; it has to be used. But first find the master who can use it. Right now mind is using you. Everybody is a mind slave unless he is enlightened. Then enlightenment is you and mind becomes your slave.

It is time for Sardar Gurudayal Singh. I have found the secret of his rainbow turban: he keeps it tightly bound around his head, otherwise it will be very difficult to be patient so long. And he is very clever also, because when everybody starts throwing all kind of gibberish, that turban protects it.

Farmer Meadow-Muffin has a barn which catches fire and burns down in the middle of the night.
The next day, the insurance man, George Grabbit, comes to inspect the damage.
"It is the company policy," explains Grabbit, "to build a replacement barn of the same size and with the same materials, instead of paying you cash for the damage."
"Well, if that's the way your company does business," snorts the farmer, "you can cancel the insurance on my wife!"

Herman Humpski is getting married to Hilda, his childhood sweetheart, but he is very worried because he is not sure about what to do on the wedding night.
He confides in his experienced friend, Kowalski, who thinks for a moment, and then comes up with an idea.
"Listen," says Kowalski, "no need to worry. I will take the hotel room next to your honeymoon suite, and when it is

time to go to bed, just sneak into the bathroom and I will give you instructions through the wall."
"Great idea!" says Herman, very relieved, and the two of them go to book the hotel rooms.
The wedding goes fine, and at the reception the cake is served by Hilda, the bride, who manages to eat an enormous quantity of it herself.
Later, at the honeymoon hotel, the young couple are getting ready for bed, when Herman sneaks into the bathroom, locks the door and knocks on the wall. Kowalski and Herman have difficulty in hearing each other through the wall, so the instructions take a long time.
Meanwhile, back in the bedroom, Hilda is dying to relieve herself of the mountain of wedding cake she has eaten. She pounds on the bathroom door but Herman will not let her in.
Finally, in desperation, she shits in a shoe box and leaves her deposit outside the bathroom door.
Sure enough, when Herman has received all Kowalski's instructions, he flings open the bathroom door and steps right into the shoe box.
"Ah!" cries Herman, "this box is full of shit!"
From the other side of the bathroom wall, Kowalski shouts, "You idiot! Turn her over!"

Pope the Polack is shocked and horrified to learn that many of his Roman Catholic priests are catching AIDS. So, in a hopeless attempt to try and preserve Christianity, he issues an edict. The edict states that all his cardinals, bishops and priests should become married immediately -- to women.

Everything goes beautifully, and all sorts of strange and wonderful Catholic weddings take place. Of course, the biggest of them all is Pope the Polack's own wedding to Sister Suzie, at the Vatican, in Rome.
The Vatican is packed with priests and politicians getting ready for the big event. And in his chambers, Pope the Polack is getting dressed in his best pope outfit, aided by his best man, Ronald Reagan.
"Are you sure that you will be able to manage married life?" asks Reagan.
"It should be simple, Ronnie," replies the Polack pope, admiring himself in the mirror.
"Yes, but you have been celibate all your life, haven't you?" says Reagan. "Are you sure that your machinery will work?"
"Ah! don't worry," replies the pope, confidently. "I tried it with my own hands last night, and now," he adds, crossing himself, "it is in the hands of God!"

Nivedano...

(Drumbeat)

(Gibberish)

Nivedano...

(Drumbeat)

Be silent. Close your eyes, and feel your body to be completely frozen.

Now you are ready to go inwards with all your consciousness, with all your life energy. Move towards the center of your being. That is from where you have come and that is where everybody goes back.
Deeper and deeper... the deeper you go, the more fragrant becomes the air. The deeper you go, suddenly flowers start showering on you. At the deepest point you are the buddha. The buddha means simply witnessing, pure witnessing. Just witness: the body is there, the mind is there, but you are neither.
You are a separate force which comes from the center, and the center is joined with eternity. It knows no birth, no death. This buddha is your ultimate potential, the very Everest of consciousness. Great is the splendor of this moment.

To make it more clear,
Nivedano...

(Drumbeat)

Relax, and continue to remember witnessing. Witnessing is the only thing in you that is eternal. Everything else is temporal; only witnessing is your reality, your very soul. I call it the buddha because it is a great awakening.
This moment the Buddha Auditorium has become a lake of consciousness without any ripples. It is such a joy to join the cosmos, such a joy for the dewdrop to disappear into the ocean.
The evening was beautiful in itself, but your presence and your tremendous experiment have made it a thousandfold

more beautiful, more graceful. The whole existence is rejoicing because you have reached to the center of your being.
Collect all the fragrance that you can manage. Remember, any moment you become a witness, you are a buddha. So bring the buddha with you.
Soon Nivedano will be calling you back. Before that, collect as many treasures as possible, and persuade the buddha to come with you. It is your very innermost core, it is not something separate. It has remained hidden inside. Now you have to bring it to the circumference, to your ordinary life.
If we can create a great number of buddhas around the world, we can have a great transformation happening. More love, more songs, more ceremonies...

Nivedano...

(Drumbeat)

Come back, but with the grace of a buddha, silently, peacefully. Sit down for a few moments collecting the experience.
Each day you are becoming richer and richer. Each day your circumference is coming closer to your center. Each day you are bringing buddha more and more in your day-to-day life.
I am against renunciation. I want buddhas to be here in the world doing all kinds of things. It was unfortunate in the past that buddhas escaped from the world. If they had remained in the world, we would not have been so

barbarious. More humanity and more culture and more consciousness would have been available to us.
That's why I say nobody has to leave the world. We have to transform it. We are bringing a new approach in religion. You don't go away from the world, but rather go deeper into it and change it. This is more courageous, more rebellious, more significant.

Okay, Maneesha?
Yes, Beloved Master.

Isan: No Footprints in the Blue Sky

Chapter #4

Chapter title: How about you?
4 November 1988 pm in Gautam the Buddha Auditorium

OUR BELOVED MASTER,
ONCE, TO KYOZAN, ISAN COMMENTED: "ALL THE BUDDHAS IN THE SAMADHI ENTER INTO A SPECK OF DUST AND TURN THE GREAT WHEEL OF THE LAW."
KYOZAN SAID TO HIM, "HOW ABOUT YOU?"
ISAN RESPONDED, "THERE IS SOMEONE; MAKING HIM AN EXAMPLE, WE CAN GET IT FROM HIM."
KYOZAN POINTED TO A WATER-BOTTLE AND SAID, "PLEASE GET IN IT."
ISAN'S RESPONSE WAS: "ALL THE BUDDHAS BY THEIR OCCULT POWERS ARE AT PRESENT IN THE MOUTH OF THE BOTTLE, TURNING THE GREAT

WHEEL OF THE LAW. CAN YOU SEE THEM DOING IT?"
KYOZAN THEN SAID, "THIS IS THE TURNING OF ALL THE BUDDHAS. HOW WILL YOU TURN IT?"
ISAN OBSERVED, "IT CANNOT BE DONE IF WE ARE SEPARATED FROM THE THING ITSELF" -- AT WHICH KYOZAN MADE HIS BOWS.

Maneesha, before I discuss the sutras, something of great importance has to be understood. Zen is neither Buddhism nor Taoism; it is a crossbreed. When the great Bodhidharma met the masters of Taoism in China, the meeting and their dialogues created something new, which has the flavor of Buddhism in it but is not dependent on Buddhist literature. It has also the flavor of Tao in it, but is not dependent on Taoist tradition. It is independent of both the parents.
As all crossbreeds are better than the parents -- even philosophical systems, theological ways, meditation function in the same way as fruits, as animals, as human beings -- the crossbreed by nature itself takes the best of both the parents and leaves all that is non-essential.
Zen's greatness and height is because it has left all the non-essentials of Buddhism and all the non-essentials of Taoism, and two great peaks have merged into a higher peak, which has only the flavor from both. But the synthesis of the flavors makes it a totally new phenomenon.
Hence the traditional Buddhist will not give any credit to Zen. He will simply laugh and will say, "It is just crazy."
The traditional Taoist also will say the same thing: "It is crazy. It is not part of our system." But this became a great

opportunity to rebel against all traditions. Zen is pure rebellion.

But unfortunately, the way history moves, even the very rebellious people... Gautam Buddha himself was a great rebellious mind; he rebelled against Hinduism, he rebelled against Jainism, he rebelled against the whole past of India. He had the guts and the genius to do it.

But this is the unfortunate part: that sooner or later Buddha had to die. His words would fall into the hands of the scholars. He could not prevent it -- although his last premonition was this: "Don't make me an institution. Don't make me a tradition! I have been against the traditional way; I don't want to become myself a tradition, but I will not be here to prevent you. So my last words are: Don't make my statues, don't make my temples, don't write my scriptures -- so that I can disappear just like the birds' footprints in the blue sky. Don't be worried that my disappearance will be in any way a disturbance in the evolution of humanity. Better buddhas will be coming, greater revolutionaries will be coming. I don't want to stand in their way."

But nobody listens. The moment he died, the next thing his disciples did was to collect all that he had said in forty-two years' continually speaking, morning, evening. And he had not allowed anybody to take notes, for the simple reason that these notes would become scriptures. But the words were so profound that the first gathering -- just the second day after Buddha's death -- decided that all the enlightened disciples should gather together. There were five hundred enlightened disciples -- this was called the first great meeting -- and they decided that everybody should relate

his experience, "so we can collect somehow the great treasure that is going to disappear if we don't collect it now."

One can understand their concern for the future generations, that Buddha should not be lost. But one can also understand that although they were enlightened, they could not agree about Buddha's last statement, his last words, and they did not even feel that they were disagreeing. So each person who had heard whatever Buddha had said related whatever he remembered. There were great troubles, because somebody said something and somebody else contradicted it saying that Buddha had said something else.

Soon it was clear that they were not all agreeing. Thirty-two schools arose; thirty-two different schools and traditions -- each claiming to be the right tradition -- and they started to make Buddha's statues, scriptures. In the whole world nobody else's statues exist more than Buddha's.

When the Arabians and Persians came into contact in Mongolia with the statue of Buddha, they had never seen anybody's statue, so Buddha's statue became to them exactly the word that symbolizes statue: budt. `Budt' is a form of `buddha'; they did not make any distinction because there were no other statues -- only Buddha's statues -- so buddha became synonymous with budt. Even today in Urdu, in Persian, in Arabic, budt means statue. It is derived from Buddha, the man who has forbidden to make his statues.

Buddhism became a tradition and again somebody of the same genius and greatness had to revolt against the

tradition. It was not a revolt against Buddha; it was a revolt against the traditionalism, ritualism. The priests with whom he had been fighting his whole life have come back; the scholars have become again important.

Bodhidharma rebelled against the Buddhist tradition, and part of his rebellion was meeting with the Tao and bringing all the flowers of Tao and creating a new experience. But he was as unaware of the fact as Buddha was. Buddha was saying, "Don't make a tradition of me," but the tradition was made. Bodhidharma rebelled against the tradition, but was not aware that he also would fall into the same trap of human mind. He became a tradition himself.

Soon it was realized by Ma Tzu that this is a sad story, that Bodhidharma, a man of fire, burning all scriptures, destroying all beliefs... Ma Tzu was also of the same caliber. To revolt is not easy. You need to have tremendous resources within you; otherwise you become futile, your words don't have the traditional depth. Tradition gives a certain depth, a certain richness, a certain refinement. A single individual, if he stands against all tradition, needs to be of a great genius, of great creativity.

Ma Tzu rebelled against the traditionalism that had grown after Bodhidharma. He introduced totally new ideas, new devices -- hitting, shouting. Nobody had ever heard that you can wake up a man just by shouting at the right moment; it was a great contribution to human consciousness that hitting can become a reward.

In the hands of Ma Tzu, Zen became again fresh -- as fresh as Buddha wanted it to be. After a thousand years, Buddha would have loved Bodhidharma and Ma Tzu, the people who rebelled. A rebellious spirit loves the very creativity

that any rebel brings to any action, thought, meditation, art, music. But Ma Tzu again -- it has to be, it seems, a matter of course that every rebellious person also becomes a tradition.

Isan also wanted to rebel against Ma Tzu. It was not against Ma Tzu, but the Ma Tzu that the tradition had created. It is a strange phenomenon: Isan loved Ma Tzu as he loved Buddha and Bodhidharma, but he could not accept the rituals that had grown afterwards, when they had died.

But Isan was not that great a genius. He could not be compared to Ma Tzu or Bodhidharma. He was very polite, and his politeness prevented his rebelling completely. You cannot be polite and revolutionary; you have to be iconoclastic and you have to hit hard against the dead tradition. Politeness will make you respectable, but not revolutionary. And that is what happened -- it is a misfortune -- Isan became a respectable master. Because he became respectable he lost the grandeur of a revolutionary. Whenever a person becomes respectable, he cannot say anything against the mass mind. The collective unconsciousness will feel hurt if he says anything revolutionary, and anything revolutionary will take away the respectability.

He was very much respected, and he managed the respect. That's where he lost the beauty of rebellion. That shows in his sutras: they are not very great or very profound; they are good enough, but very lukewarm. Just because he wanted to rebel against the rituals that had grown after Ma Tzu, Isan left shouting, he left hitting -- but he could not substitute anything else in their place. So he became in a way very poor. His humbleness was great, his simplicity

was great, but he could not contribute anything new or profound to human consciousness.

You have to remember it: respectability and rebellion don't go together. If you want respectability, you have to conform to the society -- and the society consists of blind people. Even though you have eyes, you have to walk like the blind, you have to keep your eyes closed. If you want respectability from the blind... they can give respectability only to another blind person. A man who has eyes does not belong to the mass, seems to be a stranger. Isan could not gather the courage to be a stranger.

Those who have lived a life of being a stranger come to know strange things, which ordinarily you will not come across in life. Just the other day I received a letter from a sannyasin who was present in a Jaina gathering, which also had one night invited the great poets of the country. One of the greatest poets of contemporary India, Neeraj, was there -- he has been here, so you all are acquainted with him -- and he was hooted down, forced to leave the stage, and the reason was that he mentioned my name. He introduced himself before the recital saying, "All my poetry belongs to Rajneesh. He is my source of inspiration."

Thousands of other writers and poets go on repeating what I am saying, but don't have the courage to make it clear to people from where their inspiration comes. Sheer fear of the crowd! But Neeraj is a man of all the qualities of a lion. He said, "It does not matter even if you shout. This hooliganism, this goonda-ism, won't make any difference." He left the stage saying, "Long live Rajneesh!"

People are afraid to come here, and you can see the reason: if somebody knows that they have been here, then they

must be connected with me in some way or other. There are many people who want to be here, but do not have the guts to face the masses. Even to come to hear me needs courage! Nobody is asked to agree with me; they may disagree with me -- but even for disagreement they cannot come to listen to me. They read my books hiding them under the covers of other books, because if somebody knows that they are reading my books, their respectability is at risk.

One of the chief ministers of Gujarat used to come here before he became chief minister. After becoming chief minister he stopped coming; not only did he stop coming, he told my secretary, "You should not come to see me for any work in Gujarat, because I don't want anybody to know that I have been influenced by Rajneesh, or any association with Rajneesh." Then he was defeated and again he started coming here. When you are defeated there is no need to fear: already people are not in your favor. He came here a few months ago. I told my secretary, "Anyway I am not seeing anybody -- and particularly I will not see this man who is such a coward that when he comes to power, he sends the message that it should be kept a secret that he has been following me, attending my camps. I don't like such cowardly sheepish human beings."

He understood that that is right. Now he has become again the chief minister, and I told one of my sannyasins there, "Ask him: does he want to see me?" He said, "Just don't mention his name -- at least while I am in power!"

To be rebellious you have to live as a stranger amongst your own people. Isan had the possibility of becoming a rebel -- and then there would have been some profoundness in his statements. In his anecdotes some new quality, some

new dimension, some new flowers may have blossomed. But because of respectability he kept his rebellious spirit dormant. So once in a while something comes out; otherwise he is an example of a rebel who has repressed his rebellion.

A small biographical note:
ISAN'S FOREMOST DISCIPLE WAS KYOZAN, ALSO KNOWN AS YANG-SHAN.
You will be wondering why all these masters have two names. The reason is because of China and Japan; one name is Chinese and one name is Japanese.
BETWEEN MASTER AND DISCIPLE A NEW SECT WAS ESTABLISHED, KNOWN AS THE KUEI-YANG SCHOOL.
Isan tried his best to rebel against Ma Tzu, so between the master and the disciple -- between Isan and Kyozan -- a new school was established; its name was Kuei-Yang.
IT WAS CHARACTERIZED BY THE DISTINCTION MADE BETWEEN THE ZEN OF MEDITATION BASED ON THE LANKAVATARA SUTRA, AND INSTANTANEOUS ZEN, WHICH COMPLETELY DIVORCED ITSELF FROM THE SUTRA.
The Lankavatara sutra is one of the most profound books in the world. It contains the very essentials of Buddha, and hence it is respected and loved through all the Buddhist countries. China, Japan, Sri Lanka, Burma, Tibet, Taiwan, Korea -- the whole Far East loves the Lankavatara sutra. It has tremendous beauty. It is not like other religious books; it has a great poetry in it, it is a creative work of art.

This new sect that Isan and his foremost disciple Kyozan established was against the Lankavatara sutra. It was a difficult task. I don't think Isan or Kyozan was capable of doing it. Of course, Ma Tzu could have done it. They didn't have that genius, but still what they did was good. Every rebellion is good, even if it is a small rebellion.

The Lankavatara sutra fundamentally preaches gradual enlightenment, which seems to be more rational, practical, understandable -- that step by step you move and discipline yourself, and when the time is ripe and you have come to the point where enlightenment is supposed to happen, it will happen. But it is not an instantaneous thing; it is not like instantaneous coffee. You have to prepare yourself to receive it, and that preparation can be of years. Twenty years, thirty years it may take for you to become a vehicle for enlightenment.

It was a logical system, hence Lankavatara sutra had never been opposed. Even people like Ma Tzu and Bodhidharma did not mention it. They simply avoided it. They did what they wanted to do -- which goes against Lankavatara sutra -- but they did not mention it, because they also loved it. Its beauty is so profound that it will look almost like going against yourself. So they did not mention it, they simply bypassed it, because their preaching was instantaneous Zen. They were opposing Lankavatara sutra in the very foundations, but they were capable -- Bodhidharma and Ma Tzu, these two persons were certainly capable -- of bringing a new insight. Drop the idea of gradualness and bring the idea of instantaneous Zen.

Its implications are great. The moment you drop the gradual Zen, all discipline becomes useless, all rituals

become useless, all worshippings become useless. The only thing that remains significant is meditation, and to remain in the present as a witness. I agree with them, rather than with Lankavatara sutra.

And that was the effort of Isan -- but he was not that great a genius to bring out something great and profound, comparable to Lankavatara sutra. So he was in a difficulty.

THE SCHOOL THAT EVOLVED THROUGH THE WORK OF ISAN AND KYOZAN WAS AN EFFORT TO FORMALIZE THE ANTI-SUTRA POSITION OF MA TZU.

Ma Tzu had an anti-sutra position, but Ma Tzu had the quality to create something as a substitute -- because you cannot take away from people's hands something that gives them consolation. You have to substitute something for it, otherwise your work is destructive, not constructive -- and both Bodhidharma and Ma Tzu substituted.

Bodhidharma had his own methods, not included in Lankavatara sutra. Ma Tzu went even further: the shoutings and the beatings nobody had ever heard of. His effort was so new -- that enlightenment is possible if the master hits you at the right moment, or shouts at you at the right moment; that his very shout takes your consciousness to the deepest center of your being. What meditation does slowly slowly, a good shout of the master, unexpectedly, in a situation when the disciple was asking some question, and the master jumps and shouts, or hits him, or throws him out of the door, or jumps over him... These methods were never known. It was purely the very creative genius of Ma Tzu, and he made many people enlightened.

Sometimes it looks so hilarious: he threw a man from the window, from a two-story house, and the man had come to ask on what to meditate. And Ma Tzu not only threw him, he jumped after him, fell on him, sat on his chest, and he said, "Got it?!"

And the poor fellow said, "Yes" -- because if you say "No," he may beat you or do something else. It is enough -- his body is fractured, and Ma Tzu, sitting on his chest, says, "Got it?!"

And in fact he got it, because it was so sudden, out of the blue -- he could never have conceived it. He had heard that Ma Tzu hits people, Ma Tzu shouts at people, but he had never heard that he throws them from a two-story building. He had multiple fractures... and then Ma Tzu jumped on him and sat on his chest. At that moment he was absolutely in such a shock that the mind stopped functioning -- and that was the purpose of the whole thing. And because the mind stopped functioning, and Ma Tzu was sitting on his chest, looking into his eyes -- a great silence, the same blissfulness that comes out of meditation. What a strange way!

HIS ANTI-SUTRA ATTITUDE -- Ma Tzu burned sutras. Buddhists have more scriptures than any religion, because thirty-two schools have their own scriptures, commentaries upon commentaries; it is a whole different world of literature. He burned sutras, but he substituted something. Isan wanted to be another Ma Tzu -- but he had not the guts of that man. It is not easy to throw a man out of the window, and the man said, "What about my fractures?" Ma Tzu said, "Forget about the fractures! One day everybody has to die. You have died today. And there are only seven

days to choose from -- not much of a choice. But you have got it, and that is the essential thing."

In that utter shock the man simply moved to his center. In shocks that happens. Sometimes it has happened just accidentally: your car turns over on the road, rolls into a valley, takes a few turns. Obviously your mind will stop functioning; and if you understand Zen, that is a great opportunity, because you will be at the center. Death may occur, but if you know anything about Zen, it will not occur to you. It will occur only to your body -- your consciousness will open its wings and fly to freedom.

Zen has to be made available to every person in the world, because no one knows -- every day thousands of accidents happen, but because you don't know how to use the accident you miss a great opportunity. You just get multi-fractures and a few months in the hospital -- a chance that could have made you a buddha.

I always think that if Ma Tzu were alive today, he may knowingly turn over a car on a cliff and send you rolling down, running after you, pulling you out from the wreckage and asking you as the first question: "Got it?!"

But Isan was not... because he remained concerned about his respectability. Ma Tzu dropped the idea of respectability. People like Ma Tzu don't care a bit what the world thinks about them. The world thinks they are crazy -- so what? They say, "We think that the world is crazy!"

We are all equal in that way: the world thinks we are crazy; we think the world is crazy. The decisive factor is that our craziness is blissful and ecstatic and intelligent, and their craziness is just retardedness, misery, suffering. So if both are crazy, then too you have to choose our craziness. Your

craziness is simply suffering, a tragedy that you go on carrying from the cradle to the grave, from one death to another birth, to another death. This is called the wheel of birth and death. That will come in the sutras.

The sutra:
ONCE, TO KYOZAN, ISAN COMMENTED: "ALL THE BUDDHAS IN THE SAMADHI ENTER INTO A SPECK OF DUST AND TURN THE GREAT WHEEL OF THE LAW."
It is a mythological wheel, which goes on turning, and you go on clinging to some spoke of the wheel. Again and again the same thing happens: the birth, the marriage, the business, the misery, the death -- again the birth. But who goes on moving this wheel? -- that is the question that Kyozan is asking.
"ALL THE BUDDHAS IN THE SAMADHI ENTER INTO A SPECK OF DUST AND TURN THE GREAT WHEEL OF THE LAW."
KYOZAN SAID TO HIM, "HOW ABOUT YOU?"
That's where he shows his mildness, mellowness, humbleness. It is a mythological thing -- no buddha turns into a speck of dust and no buddha turns the wheel; in fact every buddha is trying to get you out of the wheel. Every buddha is functioning to take you out of this wheel of birth and death. You have died and been born so many times, repeatedly, and you have been doing the same things again and again. You don't get anything universal, immortal; you are just an actor in a drama. The curtain rises and the curtain falls, and it goes on and on.

It is immensely good that you don't remember your past lives, otherwise you will go instantly crazy, because you have done all these things so many times that you cannot believe that you are such an idiot, so ancient an idiot; that you have been doing all these things for centuries, for many many births -- the same things, nothing has changed, you have not learned a single bit.

Buddha's work is to help you get out of this vicious circle. So the question is not right in the first place, but Isan, being always humble and trying to be polite, will not say so. If this question had been asked to Ma Tzu, he would have given such a good beating that the person would have never again asked any question. Ma Tzu declared again and again that "It does not matter what you say, you will still get a hit. Don't think that I am hitting you because you are saying something wrong! I am hitting you because you are saying something -- and I want you to reach to the place where nothing can be said."

So whether you are saying something right or wrong does not matter; it is just superficial. The hit is certain. And in what way will it come? It is spontaneous. Nobody knows whether he will throw you, or hit you on your chest with his leg, and he used to have a big staff.... And he was really perhaps the rarest man in the world; he walked like a cow, on all fours, and he looked like a tiger. His eyes were as fiery as any tiger's can be, and this behavior -- walking like a cow his whole life... He never walked like a man; it was below his dignity. He was a very strong man, and everything you could expect from him -- anything! One never knew what he was going to do. But still the man was lovable.

If this question had been asked to Ma Tzu, multiple fractures were absolutely certain, because the question is utterly baseless.

But Isan was a humble person. So when Kyozan asked him, "HOW ABOUT YOU? You are also a buddha. Have you turned into a speck of dust? And do you help the rolling of the eternal wheel of dharma?"...

ISAN RESPONDED, "THERE IS SOMEONE; MAKING HIM AN EXAMPLE, WE CAN GET IT FROM HIM."

He avoided the question, "HOW ABOUT YOU?" because to say that "Yes, I am also a buddha," needs much more humbleness than Isan possessed. To declare yourself a buddha is not a declaration of ego, because egolessness is the essential part of a buddha. The moment you say, "I am a buddha," you are saying, "I am no more." It is only a different way of saying that you don't exist -- only a pure awareness, a witnessing.

KYOZAN POINTED INTO A WATER-BOTTLE AND SAID, "PLEASE GET IN IT. If you are a buddha, and you can become a speck of dust, then this is the bottle -- you enter into it."

ISAN'S RESPONSE WAS: "ALL THE BUDDHAS BY THEIR OCCULT POWERS ARE AT PRESENT IN THE MOUTH OF THE BOTTLE, TURNING THE GREAT WHEEL OF THE LAW. CAN YOU SEE THEM DOING IT?"

Now he is not being relevant. Rather than saying clearly that "Your question is absolutely absurd," rather than saying that "Yes, I am a buddha, but no buddha turns the wheel; every buddha is trying to stop the wheel of life, so that everybody can be immortal -- without any birth and

without any death," so he goes on getting into more trouble. Just because he wants to remain humble, not to be like Bodhidharma...

Bodhidharma told the emperor Wu of China, "You are an absolute idiot!" Anyone else, Wu would have cut off his head, but looking at Bodhidharma he could see that "In comparison to him I am nothing more than an idiot. He is not being rude; he is simply being factual." That shows the great cultured mind of the emperor. But Isan has not that quality, so he goes on getting into more trouble.

Kyozan brought a bottle and said, "PLEASE GET IN IT." It should be an example for you, that whenever you are getting into any absurdity, stop in the beginning! The deeper you go, the more difficult it becomes to stop it. If you have taken one step into absurdity, you will have to take another step to be consistent with yourself -- and where will it lead? It is better from the very beginning to say that "This is nonsense!"

But Kyozan was his chief disciple, and between the two of them they have created a new school of Zen. So naturally he could not be rude with Kyozan; he was his successor. Isan considered too much about the other person -- and that was his fault, and that is the reason that in Japan the Zen people have ignored him completely. Nobody talks about Isan.

It will give you an insight that you can have respectability among the contemporaries, but nobody will remember you in the coming centuries. You will be forgotten completely, like a name written on water. But those who are condemned by their contemporaries may be remembered for centuries to come.

I am reminded of Socrates. The chief justice, who pronounced the judgment of a death sentence on Socrates by giving him poison -- that was the Greek way -- called Socrates close to him. Socrates had been arguing for days in the court. Nobody was able to argue with him, for the simple reason that he himself had no position. He never proposed anything -- any god that you can discuss, that you can argue against or for. He never proposed anything. So you were in a difficult position: whatever you said, he could contradict it. He was a great genius as far as argumentation was concerned. He contradicted everybody, finished everybody. The chief justice was impressed by him.

But in Greece in those days there were only city states and a very different kind of democracy. The whole city had the right to vote on any decision, and a decision on the fate of Socrates was so important that the whole city gathered. Against his will -- the chief justice could see that this man was innocent, and this man was a glory to his land. But fifty-one percent of the people of Athens wanted him to be killed. It was just a question of two percent of the people this way or that way: forty-nine percent of the people were in favor of Socrates' being released. But that was not the question; the decision depended on the percentage.

The chief justice decided -- even though he did not want to do such a thing. Before telling the masses, who had gathered to listen to the judgment, he asked Socrates, "Personally I am not in favor of killing you. I would give you a few alternatives. Of course I have to judge against you, because fifty-one percent of the people of the city are

against you. You can go out of Athens; there the law of Athens is no more applicable. You can be just on the boundary, so people can meet you there."

Socrates refused. He said, "I cannot go anywhere else. If Athens, which is the most cultured city in Greece, cannot allow me to live, who is going to allow me to live? There I will be more of a stranger. Here I have lived my whole life. I have not harmed anybody -- but still fifty-one percent of the people are against me, they want me dead. Anywhere else the same thing will happen."

The judge had to agree that that was true. He said, "The second alternative is: you can stop teaching, you can take a vow of silence."

Socrates said, "That is impossible! So many people are stumbling in darkness, and I know the way, and I can show them the way. No, I cannot remain silent, seeing people stumbling in darkness and blindness. I will have to speak."

The judge said, "You are making things impossible for me. Then the only alternative is: you have to be ready, because by the evening you will be given poison."

Socrates said, "That is not much of a problem. One has to die one day; perhaps my day has come. I am ready! I just want you to remember that your name will only be remembered in reference to me; otherwise nobody will ever know that you existed."

And it is true. Nobody would have known who the chief justice was if Socrates had not been poisoned and killed. But Socrates certainly is going to remain in the memories of men as long as human beings are here on this planet.

Isan is forgotten, purposely, because he considered more the public opinion, and an authentic master does not consider what the public says. He is not here to agree with someone; he is here to declare his truth. Whether anybody agrees with it or not, it is immaterial. But that is the difficulty: Isan understood humbleness in a very wrong sense. His humbleness became a compromise, his humbleness became a fear; otherwise it was so clear that he should have told Kyozan in the beginning, "What are you talking about? -- buddhas turning into dust?! Only buddhas DON'T turn into dust! They turn into a more cosmic consciousness."

But because he did not say anything against Kyozan, Kyozan asked him, "HOW ABOUT YOU?"

Being a humble person, he could not say, "I am also a buddha." That's where Kyozan was trying to drive him: to show him "whether you are really humble or not." But humbleness does not mean to compromise with lies, to compromise with absurd hypotheses. Humbleness does not mean to have a friendliness towards lies. Humbleness is not a sheep, it has to be a lion. But because he was trying to create a different school from Ma Tzu, he was caught in a difficulty: he could not shout, he could not hit, and all these other things that from the times of Buddha masters used to do. He wanted to create something new and original, and he was not capable of it.

He was a simple man, a humble man -- but not very courageous. And humbleness needs more courage than anything else; to be nothing needs more guts than to be something. When he was asked, "How about you?", he should have said, "I am a buddha -- and no buddha helps

turn the wheel of life and death, no buddha turns into dust. And you are being absolutely absurd: just because I am not Ma Tzu and I am trying to create a new school -- you know perfectly well I will not shout and I will not hit you -- that does not mean that you can go on asking absurd questions. I can at least say to you, without shouting, silently and peacefully and lovingly, `Don't be stupid!'" But even that he could not manage.

KYOZAN POINTED TO A WATER-BOTTLE AND SAID, "PLEASE GET IN IT."

That's what I am saying: Don't agree with anything stupid, otherwise there is no way to turn back. Now he has accepted that buddhas turn into dust, he has accepted that buddhas turn the wheel of life and death, Kyozan is driving him deeper. He says, "Now, please get in this bottle. You are a buddha."

ISAN'S RESPONSE WAS: "ALL THE BUDDHAS BY THEIR OCCULT POWERS ARE AT PRESENT IN THE MOUTH OF THE BOTTLE."

Such stupid nonsense! All the buddhas will choose a bottle in Isan's house and they are all gathered in the neck of the bottle, so Isan cannot enter into it because it is blocked. Once you accept any absurdity, then there is no end; you will have to accept more absurdities. You will become more and more of a mess.

And what are all these buddhas doing there? -- TURNING THE GREAT WHEEL OF THE LAW, in the bottle! Even I would have hit him as hard as possible and I am a non-violent person. He is saying, "They are turning the wheel of the law. CAN YOU SEE THEM DOING IT?"

KYOZAN THEN SAID, "THIS IS THE TURNING OF ALL THE BUDDHAS. HOW WILL YOU TURN IT?"
ISAN OBSERVED, "IT CANNOT BE DONE IF WE ARE SEPARATED FROM THE THING ITSELF" -- AT WHICH KYOZAN MADE HIS BOWS.

Isan has not proved his mettle, although his last statement is correct -- that's why Kyozan made his bows. Kyozan has asked, "How will you turn it?"

ISAN OBSERVED, "IT CANNOT BE DONE IF WE ARE SEPARATED FROM THE THING ITSELF. I am no more close to the wheel; I am still alive, I have not turned into a speck of dust. That's why I am separate from the wheel and I cannot turn it."

But accepting the very idea that buddhas turn into dust, and then their work is only to turn the wheel of life and death, is so strange and so against the very spirit of Zen, that Isan needs a good beating. If you meet him somewhere, on my behalf do a good job!

Soseki wrote:

VIRTUE AND COMPASSION TOGETHER
MAKE UP EACH ONE'S INTEGRITY.
NOTHING THAT COMES THROUGH THE GATE FROM OUTSIDE
CAN BE THE FAMILY TREASURE.
THROWING AWAY THE WHOLE PILE
IN YOUR HEART,
WITH EMPTY HANDS YOU COME,
BRINGING SALVATION.

Beautiful poetry -- and significant too.

VIRTUE AND COMPASSION TOGETHER MAKE UP EACH ONE'S INTEGRITY.

Compassion in fact is another name of virtue. All acts of virtue are acts of compassion. They are not two, only two words for the same quality.

NOTHING THAT COMES THROUGH THE GATE FROM OUTSIDE CAN BE THE FAMILY TREASURE.

He is saying, "Nothing that comes from the outside can be considered your treasure. Your treasure is already inside; it does not have to come from outside."

THROWING AWAY THE WHOLE PILE -- that comes from outside -- IN YOUR HEART, WITH EMPTY HANDS YOU COME, BRINGING SALVATION.

If you can throw away everything that comes from outside, your empty heart, your empty being is the greatest treasure, which brings salvation to you.

That's what we are doing in our meditations. Our meditations are concentrated Zen. In a very simple and joyful way, with a great playfulness, we are trying to find the treasure inside. There is no need to be serious about it. It is there -- just a little moving inwards, a single step in fact, and you have arrived at home.

Question 1

Maneesha has asked:

OUR BELOVED MASTER,

THESE DAYS WHEN YOU SAY THE WORD `WITNESS', IT HAS THE SAME IMPACT THAT THE WORDS `LOVE' OR `RELATIONSHIP' ONCE HAD. I LISTEN AS IF IT IS ACTUALLY FOOD TO NOURISH SOMETHING VITAL INSIDE.

IS THAT THE ART OF THE MASTER -- TO AROUSE APPETITES ONE NEVER KNEW ONE HAD?

Yes, Maneesha. The whole function of the master is to make you aware of your own thirst, of your own appetites, of your own longings that you have been avoiding facing. The whole art of the master is exactly to make you thirsty, hungry to reach to your own being -- because unless you reach to your own being you will remain blind, and you will remain in darkness. You will suffer birth and you will suffer death, and you will suffer all that happens between these two.

... To take you beyond suffering, to allow you the freedom of the whole sky... to create an intense urgency, because one never knows: I may not be here tomorrow; you may not be here tomorrow. Tomorrow is so uncertain -- one has to gather all his forces in this moment if he wants to do something.

Reaching to your center is not something that can be postponed. Everything else can be postponed, but not your entering into your center, because that is the very purpose of life. That is the only goal worth anything. And it is your source, so if you make an intense effort to search for it, you are bound to find it.

Nobody can miss being a buddha; one can only postpone. You can postpone for tomorrow, for another life -- but sooner or later, this century or another century, you cannot ultimately avoid coming into contact with your own nature. So why not do it now?

But before you do it -- because you may come back, or you may not come back...

Nivedano does not allow you to go too far. The moment he sees that now a few people are going too far, immediately they are called back.
And it is a very perfect time for Sardar Gurudayal Singh to have a good laugh, because who knows? -- one may or may not come back to laugh again. So before entering in, have a good laugh. This laughter will help you to be lightweight; this laughter will make your meditation a joyful, a beautiful, nonserious playfulness.
All the religions down the ages have made meditation a great seriousness. I consider it to be one of the misfortunes, because nobody wants to be serious -- life is making people serious enough -- and on top of it, nobody wants to get into any serious trouble.
But meditation is not serious. It is just one of the easiest, most silent... a dancing towards your being.

But anyway, first comes Sardar Gurudayal Singh.

Bonzo, the Australian boundary rider, hangs up his saddle for the last time.
"Come on, Bill," he says to his old faithful dog, "I've had enough of this. I'm going to become a truckdriver."
Bonzo practices his driving skills for many days and finally goes for his truckdriving test.
"Now, tell me," says the examiner, "what would you do if a kangaroo hopped in front of your truck?"
"I would stop," replies Bonzo, "and shoo it away."
"Good," says the examiner, "and supposing you ran over a prickly pear and got a puncture, what would you do?"

"I would have a few beers, eat the prickly pear, change the wheel, and then carry on," replies Bonzo.
"Good," says the instructor. "And one more question: Supposing you are driving along a two-lane highway and you see a truck coming towards you. At the same time another truck is overtaking you, and then you see another truck overtaking the truck coming towards you. There is no chance of avoiding a huge collision... what would you do?"
"Well," says Bonzo, smiling gleefully, "then I would wake up Bill."
"Really?" asks the examiner. "Who is Bill?"
"Bill is my dog," replies Bonzo.
"Really?" says the examiner. "And what good would that do, waking up your dog?"
"It wouldn't do any good," replies Bonzo. "But Bill loves to see a good smash!"

Gorgeous Gloria leaves the city one sunny morning, for a drive in her little red Alfa Romeo sports car. She is speeding through the country lanes when suddenly there is a loud banging noise from the engine. Gloria pulls the car over to the side of the road and gets out.
Obviously the car is not going any further, and it is getting late, so Gloria walks to a nearby farmhouse to explain her trouble.
Old Zeb, the farmer, offers a room to Gloria and she sleeps there for the night.
The next morning, Gloria wanders into the barn and watches Zeb's daughter milking a cow.
"That looks like fun," says Gloria. "Can I try?"
"Sure," replies the girl, getting up from the milking stool.

Gloria sits down beside the cow, grabs its tits and starts squeezing. A couple of minutes later she asks the girl, "Hey, how long do you have to pull on these things before they get hard?"

Rear Admiral Kowalski, the commander-in-chief of the Polack navy, decides to make a snap inspection of the Polack fleet. So he takes a small seaplane with Captain Cliffski, the ace pilot, to fly to the naval harbor.
While they are in the air, Rear Admiral Kowalski takes the controls of the plane and starts to guide the seaplane towards a nearby runway.
"Ahem! Excuse me, sir," says Captain Cliffski, "but this plane can only land on water, not on the ground."
"Oh yes! Silly me!" says the old Polack sea dog, and he immediately turns the plane towards the harbor and makes a perfect touchdown on the water.
As he gets out of his seat, Rear Admiral Kowalski turns to Captain Cliffski.
"I want to thank you, captain," he says, "for being so polite and tactful in telling me I was about to make a big mistake. You saved me from making a real fool of myself!"
Rear Admiral Kowalski then salutes smartly, opens the door and steps out -- straight into the sea!

Nivedano...

(Drumbeat)

(Gibberish)

Nivedano...

(Drumbeat)

Be silent. Close your eyes. Feel your body to be completely frozen.
Now look inwards, gathering all your consciousness, all your life energy -- almost like a spear, piercing towards the center of your being. It is a single step; all that you need is a great urgency.
Deeper and deeper... remember, at the center only the witness remains, just like a small flame of awareness.
It seems as if the body is miles away -- and the mind is even more far away. You are just a witness, and this witnessing makes you a buddha.
I don't teach Buddhism, I teach the buddha.
I don't want you to learn any philosophy, any teaching. I want you to know that you are buddha himself.
This moment, just witnessing, such a great silence has descended over you -- a great fragrance of a new dimension. Flowers start showering... just hold on to the center.

To make it clear,
Nivedano...

(Drumbeat)

Relax, remain just a witness. That is the only quality that goes on with you eternally. That is your eternity. That is your real life.

The body will go down into the earth. In you only one thing is immortal, and that is your witnessing quality.
The evening was beautiful in itself. The presence of ten thousand buddhas enjoying the splendor of witnessing has made it immensely great.
I can see Buddha Auditorium turning into a lake of consciousness. You are disappearing as a separate individual, relaxing into the cosmos, without any ripples.
Gather as much experience... because you have to bring the buddha to your ordinary life.
We are not the renouncers, we are the ones who rejoice. I want my buddhas to be singing, to be dancing, to be loving, to be blossoming in all colors, in all dimensions. The whole life is ours; there is nothing to abandon, but everything to be transformed, refined, made better.
At this moment you are the most fortunate people on the earth. You have to spread this cool fire around the globe. Only this cool fire can prevent this earth from destruction. And the time is very short: just twelve years. Either the life-affirmative are going to win, or the life-negative, life-destructive are going to destroy. It has never been so urgent to be a buddha as it is today.

Nivedano...

(Drumbeat)

Come back, but come as a buddha -- with the same grace, with the same silence, with the same dance in the heart.

Just sit down as nobodies for a few moments to recollect the golden path that you have followed in going to your center, and you have come back from the same path again. The buddha goes on coming closer and closer to your circumference. Soon he will become your circumference too. That day will be of great rejoicing.

Okay, Maneesha?
Yes, Beloved Master.

Isan: No Footprints in the Blue Sky

Chapter #5

Chapter title: Just be here
5 November 1988 pm in Gautam the Buddha Auditorium

OUR BELOVED MASTER,
ISAN SAID TO KYOZAN, "I HAVE HEARD THAT WHEN YOU WERE WITH HYAKUJO, IF YOU WERE ASKED ABOUT ONE, YOU COULD ANSWER ABOUT TEN. IS THAT TRUE?"
"I WOULDN'T LIKE TO SAY," REPLIED KYOZAN.
"ATTEMPT TO SAY SOMETHING THAT EXPRESSES THE HIGHEST POINT OF BUDDHISM," SAID ISAN.
KYOZAN JUST OPENED HIS MOUTH, ABOUT TO SPEAK, WHEN ISAN SHOUTED, "KWATZ!"
TWICE MORE, KYOZAN WENT TO SPEAK AND TWICE ISAN SILENCED HIM WITH A SHOUT.
KYOZAN BOWED HIS HEAD AND WEPT, SAYING, "THE FORMER TEACHER SAID THAT WHEN I MET

ANOTHER, I WOULD GAIN ENLIGHTENMENT. TODAY I HAVE MET HIM. IT IS THREE YEARS SINCE I BEGAN TO SEEK FOR BUDDHAHOOD, AND IT WAS NO MORE THAN LOOKING AFTER A COW."

Maneesha, I told you yesterday that Isan was trying hard to be a rebel against Ma Tzu -- not that he did not love Ma Tzu, but Ma Tzu had become a tradition, and he wanted to get away from the traditional mind, because tradition kills everything. It makes the dead more significant than the living.

It is such an absurd effort, to force living human beings to worship the dead rather than finding the deeper layers of life within themselves. Giving them teddy bears outside, consolations -- ugly consolations, degrading consolations...

So when Buddha became a tradition, Bodhidharma revolted against the tradition -- not against Buddha. Who can revolt against the buddha? The buddha is your very nature. You can go as far away as possible, but you cannot go far away enough. Your nature will be with you. The buddha is your highest peak of consciousness.

We are not using the word `buddha' in its historical sense. Gautam the Buddha was one of the buddhas. The title `buddha' does not denote him personally; it is simply a quality of witnessing, an arriving at home. Certainly he has become the symbol -- and a beautiful symbol if you don't make it a tradition, if you keep it alive, if you don't start worshipping it, but just start watching the beauty of it, the silence of it, the grace of it, and reminding yourself that this all belongs to you too.

So when Bodhidharma revolted, he revolted not against Buddha -- nobody can revolt against the buddha -- he revolted against the scholars and the pundits and the ritualistic religion that had grown in Gautam Buddha's wake after he was gone. But Bodhidharma became in the same way a tradition. It was very difficult to revolt against the Buddhist tradition, but Bodhidharma maintained a tremendously high quality. His rebellion brings him to the same height as Gautam Buddha. And he was capable enough -- he had a genius mind -- to create a totally different atmosphere for the seeker on the path.

But as he died, again the same thing happened: Bodhidharma became a prototype to be followed, to be imitated. Ma Tzu could not tolerate this stupidity. He had to revolt. It was not against Bodhidharma or Buddha; it was against the inertia that tradition creates.

But to revolt you need immense courage, articulateness, and a great mastery -- not only of yourself, but of mind as such. And mind expresses in thousands of ways! -- a master has to deal with thousands of types and he has to be capable to encounter each type spontaneously.

Ma Tzu maintained it even better than Bodhidharma. Ma Tzu's revolution against all tradition, against all sutras, was an immense event in the history of consciousness. He burned the sutras; he simply forced the disciples not to look out, but to look in.

Now Isan was trying to revolt against Ma Tzu because Ma Tzu had become a tradition. But Isan had not the quality of a Ma Tzu or a Bodhidharma. He was a very intelligent person and he could see that the tradition was becoming rotten; new sources of life should be made available,

otherwise it will become a dead tree. Flowers have stopped blossoming on it.

Intellectually he could see the point, but he was himself not the type of master who could manage such a vast phenomenon: rebelling against a tradition is rebelling against four million years of mind, its whole structure. And it is possible to convince people only if you have such a presence, such magnetic force, that when people come to you they are ready to drop the whole past, just for your sake. Isan was not capable of such a great love affair.

That's why yesterday I told you that his sutras are humble, simple, but they don't have the splendor and the majesty. Today you will see that he has fallen back on Ma Tzu. He could not find a substitute for Ma Tzu. He wanted to break away from the tradition that Ma Tzu's life had created, but he was not greater than Ma Tzu. Only a greater man could have managed, and Ma Tzu was impossibly greater. It is almost impossible to find a man who is greater than Ma Tzu; his inventiveness, his creativeness, his absolute strangeness in the world -- nobody has been able to surpass him.

Isan had the longing to break away from the tradition. He tried, but he could see that he was failing, it was not working. He was intelligent enough to see that he could not substitute anything in place of Ma Tzu's methods -- shouting, hitting, or throwing people back out of the doors, or closing the door in people's faces. He could not find what to do. People had become accustomed to expect from the master the unexpectable. He was a good teacher, but goodness is not the point.

Ma Tzu was a very dramatic teacher, very magnetic -- lived in a way nobody had ever lived. He walked like a cow his whole life, and looked like a tiger all around, and he had those eyes and the face of a tiger, and also the innocence and the beauty of a cow. A strange combination! And he never bothered about any conformity, any respectability, any mannerism. He acted spontaneously; even he was not aware what was going to happen, but whatever is going to happen spontaneously is right.

No man has lived so spontaneously. Obviously he looked absurd, a little mad, to the outsiders. But he attracted the seekers tremendously; they could see behind the eyes of a tiger the eyes of a buddha; they could see behind his outer behavior the inner beauty, the inner joy, the inner splendor and the possibility to get from him the transmission of the lamp.

Isan was a totally different kind of person. He tried to revolt against the tradition of Ma Tzu, but finally he had to fall back on the same techniques that Ma Tzu had created. They had never existed before.

ISAN SAID TO KYOZAN, "I HAVE HEARD THAT WHEN YOU WERE WITH HYAKUJO, IF YOU WERE ASKED ABOUT ONE, YOU COULD ANSWER ABOUT TEN. IS THAT TRUE?"

Kyozan was Isan's chief disciple, and finally was going to be his successor. He was under preparation, he was almost chosen by Isan to be his successor -- undeclared, but it was known to all the disciples that Kyozan was going to be the next master. Hence Kyozan was allowed the privilege of asking all kinds of questions, because he would have to

face the same kinds of questions when he became the successor.

In this question Isan is asking, "I HAVE HEARD THAT WHEN YOU WERE WITH your master, HYAKUJO, IF YOU WERE ASKED ABOUT ONE, YOU COULD ANSWER ABOUT TEN. IS THAT TRUE?"

He is saying, "I have heard that you were so much a man of wisdom, that if one question was asked, you could answer in ten different ways the same question. Your multidimensional wisdom was very much appreciated by Hyakujo."

"I WOULD NOT LIKE TO SAY..."

"ATTEMPT TO SAY SOMETHING THAT EXPRESSES THE HIGHEST POINT OF BUDDHISM," SAID ISAN.

The highest point of Buddhism cannot be said, not even one time -- there is no question of answering it ten times in ten different ways. To answer even one time is to commit one mistake; to answer ten times is to commit ten mistakes. Only silence is the answer if the highest point of Buddha's experience, his enlightenment, is concerned.

KYOZAN JUST OPENED HIS MOUTH, ABOUT TO SPEAK, WHEN ISAN SHOUTED, "KWATZ!"

`Kwatz' is just a sound, but it means indirectly `shut up'! But `shut up' is meaningful, hence it is avoided. It does not have that quality of "Kwatz!" `Kwatz' is not part of any language; it is simply shouting to produce the result of shutting his mouth. He has asked enough, now he should not open his mouth anymore.

TWICE MORE, KYOZAN WENT TO SPEAK AND TWICE ISAN SILENCED HIM WITH A SHOUT.

Now, the shout is an invention of Ma Tzu. It is very difficult to create new devices, new methods. It needs a totally different kind of personality. One can be enlightened, that is one thing; one can follow the well-trodden path, the well-experimented methods, and can be of immense help to people. But if he wants to be an individual peak, if he wants to stand on his own, then he needs the qualities of a buddha himself.

And as time passed it became even more and more difficult to find new ways. Great masters had passed before and they had almost exhausted every possibility of finding new methods. He relaxed back, he understood well that he was enlightened but he could not be a rebel. And to fight against Ma Tzu is impossible. Even to think what you will do against Ma Tzu... He has simply finished everything. Whatever you do will look cheaper, will not look so dramatic and so novel and so original as Ma Tzu.

Finally he had to go back to Ma Tzu. These shouts are the steps of going back -- because Ma Tzu had invented shouts. Before Ma Tzu shouts were not used, sticks were used; the master would beat the disciple. Those sticks don't hurt. Just a few days ago I received one Zen stick from Korea. I am waiting for the first German enlightened man, Stonehead Niskriya, to give that to him. It is a very good device. It is a bamboo, cut down the middle in two. On one end you can hold it, and beyond that it is cut in two parts, so you can hit. It makes much sound but does not hurt anybody.

The point was the same, but Ma Tzu... Because suddenly hitting a person who is asking a relevant question stops his mind -- "What is the matter...?" It is incomprehensible by

the mind. And that is the point: that the mind should be silent, even for a moment, and you will have a glimpse.
When for the first time these anecdotes were translated into other languages, people simply laughed: "These anecdotes constitute a religion?" It seems so strange, reading that the master hits the disciple and the disciple becomes suddenly enlightened. One could not understand the rationale of it. How can it happen that the master has hit the disciple and the disciple bows down in deep respect and gratitude?
It is possible. You can understand it. If your mind stops completely, even for a single moment, by any method, you will have a glimpse of your own innermost nature. And that glimpse is so beautiful, that glimpse is such a majesty, such a treasure, it is your eternity. The master has shown you the way that the mind has to stop thinking. For a moment you have seen the path; now follow on!
But Ma Tzu found shouting even better than hitting, because just hitting on somebody's head, it is not necessary that his mind will stop thinking. The mind may even start thinking more, "What is the matter? Why am I being hit? I have asked a relevant question and what kind of stupidity is this?"
But when a master shouts, the shout goes deeper into you than any hitting can go. Hitting can only touch your body, your head, but shouting can go piercing like a spear, and your very heartbeat may stop for a moment. Ma Tzu's great contribution was shouting, and certainly shouting goes deeper in stopping the mind than any hitting can do.
You can see the difference: hitting is a material phenomenon, shouting is psychological. And to stop the mind, some psychological hit is needed. Shouting is a kind

of hit -- invisible to your eyes, but it hits the mind completely, shakes it up, leaves it in a kind of amazement. Someone has come from far away, hearing about Ma Tzu, his greatness, that hundreds of people have become enlightened through Ma Tzu, and thousands of people live in his monastery. A person who has traveled for miles comes to Ma Tzu, asks a very relevant question, and never thinks that this man is going to shout, or jump upon him and sit on his chest, and looking into his eyes ask, "Do you get it?"

All that the person gets is a stunned mind -- but in that stunned mind there is hidden a revelation of his own nature. He may have tried hard to find it. The mind is almost like a vast jungle of thoughts; you can go on and on, it is not a small phenomenon. To take you out from the mind instantly, shouting was a very great device.

But only a great master can do it, it is not for everybody to do it. And Isan wanted to bring something new, but failed. These shouts show that he has fallen back on the old devices of Ma Tzu.

TWICE MORE, KYOZAN WENT TO SPEAK AND TWICE ISAN SILENCED HIM WITH A SHOUT. KYOZAN BOWED HIS HEAD AND WEPT, SAYING, "THE FORMER TEACHER SAID THAT WHEN I MET ANOTHER, I WOULD GAIN ENLIGHTENMENT. TODAY I HAVE MET HIM. IT IS THREE YEARS SINCE I BEGAN TO SEEK FOR BUDDHAHOOD, AND IT WAS NO MORE THAN LOOKING AFTER A COW."

These shouts worked. Kyozan has been with some teacher -- but a teacher is not a master. A teacher can give you all the instructions that are written in the scriptures. He can

make you very knowledgeable, and he has made Kyozan very knowledgeable. But those days were days of great honesty -- and particularly about truth, nobody tried to deceive.

The teacher said that "I am only a teacher. When you meet the master you will become enlightened. With me you can become only more and more knowledgeable, a great scholar, a great intellectual, because I have not found the truth myself. I myself am searching for the master who can provoke me, who can wake me up."

In the days of Gautam Buddha this country had seen a tremendous phenomenon: thousands of people moving around the country, searching for the master. They would live with teachers, and then they would find that he was only a teacher. And the teacher himself would say to them that "Whatever I could tell you, whatever I have heard, I have told you. Now move on."

Even Gautam Buddha, for six years before his enlightenment, went to many teachers. And those teachers were in a very awkward position, because they were very well known teachers, with thousands of followers, but the reason for their remaining unexposed was that no disciple was following absolutely what they were saying. So the disciples thought, "It is our fault. We are not following totally what is being said. "

But Buddha created trouble. He did a little more than those teachers had asked. He created in those six years for many teachers immense embarrassment. They had to admit to him that "I am not enlightened myself, and whatever I knew was only scholarship. Nobody has exposed me because nobody has tried me. They listened, they were

happy, they accumulated knowledge, they became scholars. But you are not interested in scriptures, you are not interested in scholarship, you are not interested in knowledge -- you insist that, `I want to see the truth!'"
So whatever they said... strange ascetic practices Buddha went through. You won't believe it but the last teacher he left had told him that he should reduce his food: from one meal a day -- and the quantity should be only that which can be held in two hands cupped, it is not a great quantity! -- then go on reducing it, bit by bit, till you come to a single grain of rice. Buddha did that. A statue exists in which he is just a skeleton, all the flesh is gone, because it took three months to come to the point where he was taking only one grain of rice per day. What can one grain of rice do?
The teacher had never thought that any man would be able to do this process, this fasting, but Buddha performed it perfectly and asked him, "Anything more?"
The teacher had tears in his eyes and he said, "Now I have to accept my defeat. I am not enlightened myself, but I have been giving such practices to people that they never can complete. That has been saving my face and my grace. You have exposed me. Now my advice is that you move on."
Thousands of people were moving all around in search of a master. There were thousands of teachers, but it was very rare to find a master who had truth as his experience.
Buddha got enlightened in a very strange way. The day the teacher said, "You have to move on. I am only a teacher, not a master. I was pretending and I am very sorry!" he was too tired. Just bones remained, and he was sitting under a bodhi tree in Bodhgaya.

The name Bodhgaya comes from Gautam Buddha's becoming enlightened there; bodh means enlightenment. Just because of Buddha the great city came into existence, because thousands of people wanted to live there, meditate under the same tree where Buddha had meditated, tried to do the same walking meditation by the side of the temple that one king had raised behind the tree as a memorial to Gautam Buddha's enlightenment.

Buddha was taking a bath by a nearby river, Niranjana. It is a very small river; in the summer it shrinks so small that you can walk across it, it is not even one foot deep. And he was taking a bath, but he was so weak that even that small current he could not cross. He had to hang onto a branch of a tree for a few moments to gather some energy so that he could get out of the river. That experience made it clear to him that just by fasting you can kill yourself, but you cannot attain enlightenment. This is a good gradual process of suicide, but it is not a process of samadhi.

"If I cannot pass this small stream, what about the mythological river, a vast river, that divides this world from the other heavenly world? If I cannot cross Niranjana, a small river, what are the possibilities for me? I will not be able to cross that vast river that divides these two worlds. It is almost like an ocean." It is mythology, but in his mind at that time -- up to that time -- there was only mythology, philosophy; he was not yet enlightened. But hanging onto the branch or the root of the tree, he thought that "I have been wasting my time."

He came out. It was a full moon night, and he was so weak that he could not go into the town that day to beg, so he remained under the tree. But by chance one woman, Sujata

-- her name, Sujata means wellborn or born in a high-class society. I have discussed with Buddhist scholars that her name simply shows that she was born in a low-caste society. You can see it: in India the blind man is called kamalnayan, lotus-eyes. If you have eyes, nobody will call you lotus-eyes; that is reserved for the blind man -- not to insult him. Sujata cannot be a high-class woman, otherwise she will not have that name. That name suggests that she comes from the lowest sudra caste, the untouchables. As a consolation they give good names.

In India, when somebody dies, they say he has become beloved of God. And what are we all doing here? Only the dead become beloved of God. God seems to be a kind of cannibal! The more people die, the more happy God is of course -- more beloveds are coming. When the corpse of a dead man is taken from his home to the funeral pyre it is called mahayatra, the great journey. It is not more than one mile or two miles, it is not much of a great journey. The poor fellow has died, but reading about it you may think he has gone on a great journey. Just to hide the truth, man has always been clever with words.

This woman Sujata, according to me, is a harijan, and only harijans would come to such a poor place near the Niranjana river. She had been worshipping the tree, and only the lower classes worship the trees, not the richer. She had promised the tree that if a boy was born to her, she would bring for the tree many sweets, many flowers. And this was a coincidence, just a mere coincidence, that in the full moon night a beautiful young man was sitting under the tree. She thought, "The god of the tree has come out to receive the sweets!" She was immensely happy, because it

rarely happens that the god of the tree comes out, and she offered Buddha all the sweets.

This way, after three months he had a right breakfast; otherwise, living on smaller and smaller quantities... and yesterday he had eaten only one grain of rice. Sujata was very happy. The son had been born and the god of the tree had accepted. After eating, Buddha dropped for the first time.... Six years before he had dropped the kingdom and all the material things of the world, all possessions. He had carried only one longing -- for truth. This night, with the full moon in the sky, he dropped that longing too, because that longing had become his desire, and whenever there is even a small desire, mind continues. It does not matter whether you desire money or God, it does not matter whether you desire power or enlightenment; desire is desire, and with desire the mind remains alive.

That night he dropped the last desire. Six years he had taken all kinds of torture upon himself. It was enough! And he slept for the first time after six years, utterly relaxed -- no desire, no longing, no future, no hope -- he simply slept without any mind, no dreams. All were shattered. He was finished. "There is no truth and there is no world. It is all nonsense and I have simply spoiled myself."

That night he slept without a mind, and a sleep without a mind is very close to samadhi. That's how Patanjali defines it: there is our ordinary waking state, below it is our dreaming state, below that is our dreamless sleep, and below that is our enlightenment, our absolute awakening. The whole night he slept in a dreamless sleep. That created the opportunity. Just one inch more, a little push more... As he opened his eyes -- for the first time without any desire --

the last star was setting, and with the last star setting, he suddenly became aware, so full of awareness.... The sun was rising outside and the sun was also rising inside. From dreamless sleep he had fallen to the fourth state of awakening, of buddhahood.

This buddhahood was attained when he had dropped even the desire to be a buddha. The mind has to be utterly empty. And the master's function is to help you on the way of emptiness, because emptiness is the opportunity for fulfillment.

First you have to be empty of everything that you know of; only then can you be filled by the divine. Flowers can start showering on you from unknown sources -- and in emptiness a great flame of awareness arises in you which brings you the sense of eternity, immortality, a great peace that passeth understanding, a serenity, a silence, a blissfulness, and an ecstasy that knows no ending. You are for the first time drunk with the divine.

Those were golden days in the sense that at least there were thousands of people searching. The people were poor, there was no technology and no science and no progress, but they were rich in a different sense: their search for the innermost treasure made them the richest people of the world. Thousands attained enlightenment, and hundreds became masters of creating situations -- because enlightenment is your nature, it is not an achievement; you have not to go anywhere, you have to just be here and dig deep.

As you pass beyond your skull and beyond your bones, your skeleton, and you find the life source from where the life is spreading to your body and the mind, immediately you have found the eternal cosmic existence. Your small

river of life is coming from the great ocean that surrounds you all around. It is the same ocean the trees are being nourished by, it is the same ocean the birds are being nourished by, it is the same ocean all life as such is being nourished by.

Man is the most blessed animal in the world, in the sense that he is not only capable of life, he is also capable of consciousness; not only capable of consciousness, but also capable of becoming totally conscious. This total consciousness gives you the freedom, the salvation, and the blissfulness that you were seeking in small and mundane things, where it does not exist.

When it is said that somebody has become enlightened, it simply means he has found the source of his life and consciousness. But by finding the source of your life and consciousness, you have found the source of all life and all consciousness. By becoming a buddha you have become one with all the buddhas. There are no more any separations of bodies, there are no more any separations of time and space.

If I am speaking on these buddhas, I am not a scholar and I am not speaking as a scholar. I am speaking according to my experience. These buddhas, Ma Tzu or Isan or Kyozan, cannot have another experience. It is the same ocean. Anywhere you taste it, it tastes salty.

KYOZAN BOWED HIS HEAD AND WEPT...

This weeping is of great joy. There are times when you cannot say anything through words, but you can say through tears. In a moment of great love it is so absurd to

say, "I love you!" -- it is so profane! In a moment of gratitude, to say "Thank you" is ugly.

In India it is almost impossible -- the West has not known the deepest meaning. In India, if a father does something for the son, the son cannot say, "Thank you, father"; he can show his gratitude by touching his feet, he can show his gratitude by his tears, but not by words. Words are very empty, tears are very full; and tears come from your depths, words come only from your mind.

KYOZAN BOWED HIS HEAD AND WEPT, wept out of great joy and gratitude, SAYING, "THE FORMER TEACHER SAID THAT WHEN I MET ANOTHER, I WOULD GAIN ENLIGHTENMENT. TODAY I HAVE MET HIM. IT IS THREE YEARS SINCE I BEGAN TO SEEK FOR BUDDHAHOOD, AND IT WAS NO MORE THAN LOOKING AFTER A COW."

He had been with teachers and they would give him jobs -- looking after the cows, looking after the kitchen, looking after things. But without giving him any job, Isan has given him only three shouts and he has become enlightened.

It does not mean that people should not work; it simply means, "Work only around a master, a living master, otherwise you are just taking care of the cows." And being with a master simply means being no more. Dissolve yourself. Become utterly empty, with no desire, and the blessed moment can happen just now. It does not need any great practice or any ascetic torture; it needs only going back into your uttermost depth. There you are a buddha already. Once recognized, you know the path. It is very small.

Slowly slowly you can start bringing your buddha from the hidden sources to the surface of your life. Your every activity, your words, will start having a new golden flavor. Your silences will start becoming songs -- a music of a different dimension. Your ordinary walking will become like a dance -- so joyful. Your whole life will be spread as a blissfulness, a drunkenness. You will live with your totality, you will love with your totality, and this life will be your last life.

If you can attain enlightenment then you don't have to wander from one womb to another womb. You have been wandering for centuries from one womb to another womb. If you become enlightened in this life, then death will not take you into another womb, you will disappear into the cosmic life, into the cosmic fire. You will become one with the whole -- you will be the whole.

Soseki wrote:

I HAVE SLEPT BY THE COLD WINDOW AND
COME BACK FROM THE LAND OF DREAMS.
THE EYE OF MY MIND
HAS OPENED BY ITSELF,
WITH NO NEED OF THE MORNING STAR.

He is referring to the morning star of Gautam Buddha. He is saying,

THE EYE OF MY MIND
HAS OPENED BY ITSELF,
WITH NO NEED OF THE MORNING STAR.
ALL OF HEAVEN AND EARTH HOLD UP
THIS MOUNTAIN COVERED WITH SNOW.

WHERE IN THE WORLD IS THERE A PLACE FOR SHAKYAMUNI TO PRACTICE?

Shakyamuni is another name of Gautam Buddha; that is his family name. He was a shakya -- a tribe of warriors -- so he is also called shakyamuni: shakya who has become silent. It is a very loved name -- just to call him Shakya.

Soseki is making a very beautiful statement: I HAVE SLEPT BY THE COLD WINDOW AND COME BACK FROM THE LAND OF DREAMS.

Your land is the land of dreams. Soseki is saying, "I have come back from the land of dreams. The eye of my mind -- the third eye, the eye that looks within -- has opened by itself, with no need of the morning star disappearing into the blue sky."

Every man has to become enlightened in his own way. Although he loves Gautam Buddha, he is saying, "There is no need to follow his footprints, because no buddha leaves footprints. A buddha is just like a bird, flying into the blue sky, leaving no footprints."

ALL OF HEAVEN AND EARTH HOLD UP THIS MOUNTAIN COVERED WITH SNOW. WHERE IN THE WORLD IS THERE A PLACE FOR SHAKYAMUNI TO PRACTICE?

He is making a statement in the Zen language: "There is no need and there is no place in the world to practice. Why did Shakyamuni practice for six years unnecessarily? You can become this very moment the buddha. Why unnecessarily practice -- where is the place and where is the time?"

A loving criticism of one's own master. Soseki is right. But Buddha had his own problem. He was, as far as we know,

the first buddha who has created a great impact on humanity. Certainly, it is probable that many buddhas had appeared before Gautam Buddha, but they have not left such an impact.

Even in the times of Gautam Buddha eight contemporaries declared they were enlightened -- and most probably they were enlightened. A few sentences have come from Buddha and Mahavira concerning the other six -- because they never wrote anything -- and the other six seem to have been more rebellious people. They never allowed any following, and the few statements criticizing them, by Gautam Buddha and Mahavira...

These two have remained in the memory of man. Mahavira has remained a very local figure; for very small reasons he could not become a world figure. Otherwise, he was older than Buddha and certainly a great individual, but he created strange confinements for himself. First, he was naked. Now no country would allow him naked, they don't allow me even with clothes! I can try naked....

Secondly, he had such strange ways -- just like Ma Tzu -- that he would have been thought of by other people as insane. He remained for months on fasts. In a twelve year period of silence, when he remained silent, he ate only thirty days -- in twelve years! And he would not accept food from just anyone. He had such a strange way, but it has its own meaning. In the morning, when he would be meditating, he would decide that if he knocks at a door for food and a certain situation is fulfilled, only then will he accept food; otherwise he will go out of town.

For example, if he knocks on the door and the woman is weeping, or she is doing a certain kind of work, or on the

road two cows are standing -- anything that came to his mind in the meditation -- and if that condition was not fulfilled, he would go back. His idea was that "If existence wants me, then it has to fulfill my conditions. If existence does not want me, I don't have anything to do here. Why should I force myself on existence? I leave it in existence's hands."

A strange idea, but it has great meaning. His trust in existence is absolute: if it wanted him, then good; otherwise, "I can relax, I can disappear. Why should I carry on unnecessarily without existence needing me?" It was clear to him that "If existence needs me for any purpose, it will manage my life. I have left it in existence's hands."

Now, such a man would have been in difficulty in any other country. He would not cut his hair with a razor, he would simply pull his hairs -- because he would not use any kind of technology. What technology is a small razor? -- but it is technology. He would not use any technology -- he was far ahead of Mahatma Gandhi. Mahatma Gandhi at least used the spinning wheel; that is a technical thing.

Mahavira did not use anything -- no clothes, so there was no need for a spinning wheel; he did not use even a begging bowl. What is the need of a begging bowl? If all the animals can manage without begging bowls, you seem to be utterly stupid.... He drank water from the river just like any dog or any animal, and he would pull out his hairs.... In psychology they have a certain kind of insanity in which the insane person tears his hair -- and particularly women: when they have a tantrum, they start tearing their hair.

In any other country Mahavira would have been thought... First he was naked; secondly, his strange behavior of

eating; thirdly, his pulling his hairs -- but he had a point in everything. But that confined his impact, it remained only a small stream in India. Now there are only twenty-two naked monks -- it is a very small stream. But the idea behind it was absolutely clear.

Even the followers of Mahavira don't discuss exactly the meaning of his nakedness. I have not come across a single scripture in twenty-five centuries which discusses the point about his nakedness. They simply say, "Because he has dropped all possessions, that's why he has dropped clothes." But that is not the real thing. The real thing is his celibacy: according to him the celibate person should live naked; then only can he prove that he is celibate. Just think, all your celibate monks... Because the whole mechanism of sex is such that an idea arises in your mind and immediately your sexual machinery starts giving you hints -- and the whole society will see that "What kind of celibacy is this?"

I don't think that any Catholic monk, the pope, or any shankaracharya is capable of fulfilling the test of Mahavira. His test is absolutely correct. The question is, "How do we know that you are celibate?" Even to think in your mind about sex will immediately affect your body, and everybody will know that you are not celibate.

In twenty-five centuries nobody has considered his scientificness about it. He is absolutely scientific, because behind the clothes you can be celibate and still enjoy dreams of making love to Sophia Loren, and nobody will know. But if you are naked then it is very difficult: the moment you start thinking of Sophia Loren immediately your flag starts rising up.

I absolutely agree with Mahavira that every celibate -- if he wants to be celibate -- should be naked. I am not in favor of celibacy, but if somebody wants to be celibate, then he has to follow the rules of the game.

But Jaina monks perhaps are the only ones who can be said to be celibate. It takes years -- five stages of training. Only on the last stage they can become naked, when the master allows the disciple, "Now you can become naked." The reason is that the sexual center is not in the genitals, the sexual center is in the mind. Unless that center is controlled by your meditations, unless that center is purified completely of any desire, you cannot stand to be naked; you will be immediately exposed.

Those six others were also enlightened -- but everybody follows his own way. Buddha used clothes, and just because Buddha used clothes, he became a world-wide phenomenon. The whole East became Buddhist. Although Mahavira was old and a very beautiful personality, the way he proposed to live was not for everyone; it was immensely difficult. Just the clothes made the difference.

There must have been other buddhas.... Mahavira was a buddha. You have to be aware of the fact that Jaina scriptures use both the terms for Mahavira: jinna -- jinna means the conqueror of oneself -- and Buddha, the awakened one. The Buddhist scriptures also use both the terms: jinna, the conqueror, and buddha, the awakened one. But by and by it became settled -- because this would be confusing -- it became settled that Gautam Buddha would not be called jinna and Mahavira would not be called Buddha, to make things clear. But both are both!

And the other six perhaps were more colorful personalities, but they did not allow any followers. Obviously, if you don't allow any followers, who is going to collect your teachings, collect your life for the coming centuries? Sooner or later your name will disappear. But that was the point of those six: "There is no need for our names to remain. Just as we disappear, our names should disappear. What is the purpose for our names to remain, or our teachings to remain?"

There is a great point in it. Their insistence that "There is no need for our teachings," has many implications. First, "Only living masters can transform human beings. Our words, our teachings won't do that; they will create only teachers." Secondly, "Why should we keep in bondage the coming future? We lived our lives, we shared our lives with our contemporaries. Now let the future be free for new masters to take place, for new buddhas to take place. We should not be a hindrance and we should not become a burden on the future" -- a tremendously rebellious attitude. All these people...

Soseki says, "Where is a place, where is space, where is time FOR SHAKYAMUNI TO PRACTICE?" He is against practice. I am against practice. Practice can make you only an actor. You have to be spontaneous, not disciplined and practiced. You have to be yourself in your naturalness, in your wildness, in your spontaneity.

Question 1

Maneesha has asked:

OUR BELOVED MASTER,

IS OUR IDENTIFYING WITH OUR BODY AND/OR MIND ALL THAT IS PREVENTING US FROM BEING ONE WITH EVERYTHING?

Yes, Maneesha. Identification with the body, with the mind, with our possessions, with our families, with our friends -- any kind of identification takes you outwards. All your possessions will be outwards: your wife, your husband, your children, your body -- your body is outside you; your mind -- your mind is outside you.
The only thing that is not outside you is the witnessing. Just the watchfulness -- that is your buddha. Identification means losing witnessing, falling into the trap of attachment. That is our misery, that is our slavery.

Now it is time for Sardar Gurudayal Singh.
He seems to be sitting very far away. Just put the light on! Everybody has to see his rainbow-colored turban!

One morning, Mad Melvin, Loony Larry, and Crazy Karl all escape from the Sunnyvale Insane Asylum.
Happy as larks, the three loonies go into town and come upon the construction site of a huge skyscraper. They look around curiously, when suddenly a man in a hard-hat walks up to them.
"Hey, you guys," shouts Klopski, the job foreman. "Get back to work and finish digging that trench!"
The three loonies all smile and nod in unison, then run around and start working on the trench. A couple of hours later, Klopski comes back to see how they are doing. He is shocked to find Mad Melvin digging furiously, while the

other two loonies are standing motionless, holding their shovels in the air.
"What the hell are you doing?" screams Klopski at Loony Larry and Crazy Karl.
"We are street-lights," replies Loony Larry.
"You must be nuts! You are fired!" shouts Klopski, sending the two loonies away.
But Mad Melvin stops working immediately.
"No," says Klopski. "Not you, you are working well, just continue your digging."
"What?" cries Mad Melvin. "In the dark?"

The Medical Corporation of America decides that there is only one way to cure AIDS, and that is with money -- lots of money. So they arrange with all three TV networks in America to have a giant AIDS-Telethon, to take place on Saturday night.
The idea is that Rock Hunk, the famous movie star, will make love to five hundred women on TV, while the American public phones in its pledges.
On the big night, Rock Hunk gets up to four hundred and seventy-five women and the money is pouring in. Rockefeller Foundation phones in and donates millions, NASA phones in and donates the funds for the space program. Even Ronald Reagan phones in and donates Nancy's dress fund. Money is pouring in, and it looks like AIDS is going to be cured for sure.
But when Rock gets to four hundred and ninety-five, he passes out. They throw buckets of iced water on him and he staggers to his feet and wobbles over to the next woman. At four hundred and ninety-eight, it looks like he is really

finished, but the woman somehow manages to arouse him, and the money keeps pouring in.
But at four hundred and ninety-nine, Rock passes out, and no one is able to wake him up.
The whole country is furious and everyone phones in and takes back their pledges.
Eventually, George Bush, the host of the show, manages to revive Rock and drag him into the office.
"We almost cured AIDS!" cries Bush. "What the hell happened?"
"I just don't understand it!" replies Rock. "Everything went fine this morning at the rehearsal!"

Nancy Reagan is walking into the White House dining room to have lunch with Ronald and discuss their retirement plans. Suddenly Alvin Mindbender, a close family friend, races past Nancy in a sweat and disappears down the hall.
Nancy goes on into the dining room, sits down over a big lunch, and starts chatting to Ronnie.
Meanwhile, in the Oval Office, Alvin Mindbender is frantically phoning all over the country to find Vice President Bush, who is finishing up his presidential campaign tour.
Two hours later, in Santa Fe, New Mexico, Alvin at last gets Bush on the line.
"George, thank God!" cries Alvin. "I've been trying to reach you for two hours! There has been a terrible tragedy at the White House...!"
Meanwhile, back in the White House dining room, Nancy has just finished her banana split dessert. "Now, Ronald,"

she says, wiping her mouth. "I insist we take down those purple and green striped curtains in your bedroom at the ranch-house...."
Suddenly, Alvin, still sweating buckets, bursts into the room. Seeing Nancy chatting to Ronald, he stops dead in his tracks, and his jaw drops open.
"Holy shit, Nancy!" screams Mindbender. "What the hell are you doing? Ronald died two hours ago!"
Nancy, takes a close look at the senile old president. "My goodness," she says, "how can you tell?"

Nivedano...

(Drumbeat)

(Gibberish)

Nivedano...

(Drumbeat)

Be silent. Close your eyes. Feel your body to be completely frozen.
Now, look inwards with your total consciousness, with a great urgency, as if this is going to be the last moment of your life. Deeper and deeper, and you will find the path.
It is a small path, getting out of the mind, getting out of the body, and reaching to the source which is connected with the cosmos. Its only quality is witnessing. So just witness and be a buddha.

A great silence will start falling over you and a deep desire, a deep longing to disappear into the cosmos will be felt for the first time. A great joy -- for no reason at all -- will fill your whole space.
This moment is precious. Even for a moment to be a buddha is a great blessing. If you know to be a buddha even for a single moment, you know it. You can be a buddha twenty-four hours, round the clock. Just remember: being a buddha means being a witness.
Great flowers will start showering on you -- of peace, of bliss, of ecstasy.

To make it more clear, Nivedano...

(Drumbeat)

Relax, but go on holding the witness.
You are not the body, you are not the mind, you are the one who is seeing the body, seeing the mind; and as your witnessing deepens, your separation from others will disappear. The Buddha Auditorium starts becoming a lake of consciousness with no ripples, no distinctions -- just a pure dance of bliss and ecstasy.
Rejoice in it and collect as much experience of witnessing as possible. The fragrance that is surrounding you, the ecstasy -- gather all of them to bring back to the circumference.
From the center to the circumference you have to bring your buddha slowly, slowly. It is a tremendous treasure. You can bring as much as you want, it is inexhaustible.

At this moment you are eternal, you are immortal, you are one with the cosmos.
This evening has been a beautiful evening on its own accord, but you have made it more golden by your silence, witnessing, by your joyfully relaxing into the home.
Before Nivedano calls you back, collect as much fragrance, as many flowers...

Nivedano...

(Drumbeat)

Come back, but come back as a buddha, with the same grace, with the same silence, with the same beauty.
Sit down for a few moments, just recollecting where you have been, on what golden path you have moved, forward and backward, and how much of witnessing you have brought from your very life source.
This witnessing has to be carried around the clock.
A day certainly comes when you don't need to meditate, when buddha remains in every circumstance present, fully radiant. All actions are his actions, you are no more. The buddha sings, the buddha dances, the buddha smiles. You have become just a passage for the buddha.
That day is not far away. It can happen any moment. Be prepared. It is not a practice, it is simply creating the right moment for the spring to come and bring all that is possible to your potentiality. Thousands of flowers...

Okay, Maneesha?
Yes, Beloved Master.

Isan: No Footprints in the Blue Sky

Chapter #6

Chapter title: The only hope
6 November 1988 pm in Gautam the Buddha Auditorium

OUR BELOVED MASTER,
ISAN SAID TO KYOZAN: "MOST OF THE PEOPLE UPON THIS GREAT EARTH, WITH THEIR LIMITLESS CONSCIOUSNESS OF CAUSE AND EFFECT, LACK THE AWARENESS OF THAT ORIGINAL NATURE WHICH THEY SHOULD RELY UPON. CAN YOU TELL WHETHER THEY HAVE THIS AWARENESS OR NOT?"
KYOZAN REPLIED: "I HAVE EXPERIENCED THIS DIFFICULTY." JUST AT THAT MOMENT, A MONK PASSED BY AND KYOZAN CALLED OUT TO HIM, "JARI!" AND THE MONK TURNED HIS HEAD.
KYOZAN COMMENTED TO ISAN: "THIS IS A CASE OF WIDE CAUSE AND EFFECT CONSCIOUSNESS WITHOUT AWARENESS OF THE FUNDAMENTAL UPON WHICH ONE SHOULD RELY."
ISAN OBSERVED: "IT IS A DROP OF LION'S MILK WHICH WILL CURDLE SIX GALLONS OF DONKEY'S MILK."
ONCE, ISAN COMMENTED TO KYOZAN: "THE WHOLE DAY WE ARGUED ABOUT ZEN AND WHAT DID WE GET OUT OF IT ALL?" -- AT WHICH KYOZAN DREW A LINE IN THE AIR.

ISAN OBSERVED: "IF IT WERE NOT I, SOMEONE WOULD BE DECEIVED."

Maneesha, the anecdote touches a very fundamental problem. To understand it, you have to understand the implications of it. We all think we are aware; that is one of our unawarenesses. We are only functionally aware.

We have learned to do things, to go to bed, to get up early in the morning, to go to the job. Everything has been learned. Even a robot can do the whole process. You are not needed. And that's exactly what has happened to humanity. It is a robot humanity. You have learned everything that is necessary and given it to your robot mind who goes on doing things on your behalf. And giving the charge to the mind you have gone to sleep.

The whole effort of the buddhas is to bring out your consciousness and to make you clearly aware of the distinction between functioning consciousness and a pure consciousness which has no function, just a mirror. The mirror has no function, it has utility, but even while you are looking in the mirror, the mirror does not do anything. The reflection is spontaneous. Even if you don't want the reflection, still it will reflect -- and the mirror is not in need of you to stand before it.

The way Zen expresses it is this: The full moon shines in the lake. Neither the full moon desires to be reflected -- but it is reflected -- nor does the lake want to reflect it, but it does reflect it. Both are not at all doing any active work in this reflection. Both are just being themselves and the reflection comes on its own accord. You do your things and

only in doing your things can you separate the functioning consciousness and the pure consciousness.

When you walk, do you know you are walking? When you are silent, are you aware that you are silent? When you are eating, is there any awareness standing by the side, watching your function of eating? That awareness is the great enlightenment. It has no function, it has no utility, it is not a means to some end. It is enough unto itself. It is such a contentment, such deep satisfaction with oneself and the cosmos, such a strong let-go, that you don't have to do anything. Just being is more than you can have conceived -- the joy of just being, the blissfulness of just being.

I pass every day Mukta's pond, and those two swans are just twenty-four hours a day enjoying, doing nothing. And they look so dignified, so utterly contented... not even a shadow around them of any desire or any ambition, or of any position, of any success. All those are stupid things. They are enjoying every moment, just sitting in the pond.

A consciousness is just like what Basho calls, "Sitting silently, doing nothing, the spring comes and the grass grows by itself." What he is saying is, "As far as I am concerned, I am not doing anything, neither am I desiring anything. The spring comes on its own accord, uninvited. The grass starts growing without any effort on my part. I am just a watcher, sitting silently, doing nothing."

This non-doing awareness, which has no function in the world but is simply a blissfulness, an ecstasy, a drunkenness utterly centered in the present moment... That is the whole idea of the buddhas: to make you aware that something is hiding inside you. But because it is of no use, you don't care about it.

The world consists of utility, and your consciousness is of no utility. You cannot earn by it, you cannot sell it, you cannot do anything by it. It is not a doing energy. It is simply being -- a being energy that stands just like an Everest, silently, for centuries.

In this anecdote Isan is trying to make his disciple, Kyozan, aware of this non-doing effortless isness of your existence. And this is the greatest beauty and the greatest truth. There is no other beyond it.

ISAN SAID TO KYOZAN: "MOST OF THE PEOPLE UPON THIS GREAT EARTH, WITH THEIR LIMITLESS CONSCIOUSNESS OF CAUSE AND EFFECT, LACK THE AWARENESS OF THAT ORIGINAL NATURE WHICH THEY SHOULD RELY UPON."

People are conscious, but very superficially, of ordinary things. They are functional beings and they do a thousand things, so you cannot say they are absolutely unconscious. At the most they can be called superficially conscious. According to the psychologists and their measurements, only one tenth of your consciousness is being used. Nine tenths -- nine times more consciousness -- simply remains, and you are not even aware of it. And that is your eternal treasure. That is your original face. That is your innocence. Everything in you will die, except only that consciousness which simply witnesses -- as Basho is doing. Sitting silently, certainly he is a witness; doing nothing, he is a witness; the spring comes, he is a witness; the grass starts growing by itself, he is a witness -- but other than as a witness he is not involved. This witnessing is our ultimate ground of existence. This is our eternity.

Isan said to Kyozan, "Can you tell whether they have this original witnessing, this original consciousness? Functional consciousness I can see, everybody can see."
KYOZAN REPLIED: "I HAVE EXPERIENCED THIS DIFFICULTY."
Because a man seems to be perfectly aware, he is doing things... how to know whether he is originally conscious or not? In the very depth of his heart, is he aware?
"I HAVE EXPERIENCED THIS DIFFICULTY."
JUST AT THAT MOMENT A MONK PASSED BY AND KYOZAN CALLED OUT TO HIM, "JARI!" AND THE MONK TURNED HIS HEAD. Now this is functional.
KYOZAN COMMENTED TO ISAN: "THIS IS A CASE OF WIDE CAUSE AND EFFECT CONSCIOUSNESS WITHOUT AWARENESS OF THE FUNDAMENTAL UPON WHICH ONE SHOULD RELY."
Now this man who is being called turns his head. Obviously he is a little bit conscious, but is he aware that he is turning his head? Turning the head is a function; it needs very little consciousness. But is he also aware that he is turning the head? If he is also aware of turning the head, then he will have the original consciousness, the witness. If he is only conscious enough to turn the head, that can be done by a robot, by a machine -- but no machine can ever become a buddha.
You have to understand. It was not available to Buddha or to Isan, but to us things have become more clear. The computer can do better work than you, far more efficiently, without getting tired. But it can do only that which it has been taught to do. If something new comes, the computer will be at a loss to respond because it knows only ready-

made answers. You can put whole libraries in it, and it is capable to absorb in its memory all the libraries, and whatever those libraries contain will become the content of the computer's memory. If you ask a question that is part of the contents of the memory of the computer, immediately the right answer will come. But if you ask something that the computer has not been fed before, the computer will remain utterly silent. It cannot respond on its own because it has no original consciousness.

So your superficial consciousness is not of much more value than a robot mechanism. If your name is called, you will turn and look -- but are you also aware that your name is called and you are turning and looking? Only that deeper awareness can transform your life; otherwise you will remain a computer. What is your whole education for? -- to make you a better computer, to feed you more information. Whatever you do and whatever you say, ask the question: Is it you or has your mother told you to do it this way, or your father, or your teacher, or your priest? Is it you, or is it somebody else who is manipulating you? And you will be surprised that you have never acted even for once spontaneously, you have always relied upon the memory. The memory comes from others. It may come from your experiences, but the response should not come from memory, it should come from your alertness.

One day, a man asked Buddha some philosophical question and Buddha answered him. The man contemplated on it. The next day he again came to Buddha and he said, "My problem is not solved."

Buddha said, "Repeat your question." And Buddha answered in a totally different way.
The man was puzzled. He said, "Yesterday you have said something, now you are saying something else."
Buddha said, "Yesterday was yesterday, and today is today. And don't trust me: tomorrow is going to be tomorrow. I respond moment to moment. It is not a question of memory and time; it is a question of my being totally available to you right now. I don't remember your question, neither do I remember my answer. Yesterday is finished.
"And it is such a beautiful day today, why bother about yesterdays and tomorrows? Let us face each other now, this very moment. You ask the question, my mirror is ready to reflect. But I cannot promise you that I will remain consistent tomorrow also, because who knows? -- things change, everything is in a flux. What is right this moment may not be right tomorrow."
This is functioning from the original consciousness. The original man is never consistent, cannot be; only a dead man can be consistent.

It came as a surprise to me: for almost ten years we have been fighting the Indian government on the question of whether our school is a teaching school, an educational system. The government had no answer; they have taken away our tax-exempt status. But what finally the supreme authorities of taxation came to conclude was that while I am alive, tax-exempt status cannot be given, because I can change tomorrow. I agree with them. Tax-exempt status can only be given to dead people, because they cannot change howsoever they toss and turn in their graves.

Everything has become dead. Then it is acceptable, respectable. But a man who is alive and spontaneous is dangerous to the status quo.

As I entered America the first question they asked me was, "Are you an anarchist?" They had a big file already on me. I said, "You look like an intelligent person. I can say I am not an anarchist and tomorrow I can become one, because my today cannot make a confinement, a slavery for my whole life. So what is the point of asking such questions? Consistency at least is not my way. If it is convenient to you, you can write that I am not an anarchist, nor a communist -- but as far as I am concerned, I am both and a little more."

He said, "A little more?"

I said, "Of course -- because Bakunin is dead, Kropotkin is dead, Marx is dead. If they were alive they would have changed many things in their philosophy. And I have to do the work of completion; that is the `little more.'"

Life is always an open river. You never know where it will take the turn. You cannot take a promise from the river that it will not turn at such a point. Nature never promises you anything. A promise certainly means a confinement, it means a bondage. It means you are accepting that from this moment you will not live. When you say, "I am a Christian," you are dead. You cannot go beyond Christianity or against Christianity. Even if you see clearly that something is wrong, you have to keep your mouth shut. You are a Christian.

The moment you belong to an organization, to a religion, to a political party, you have to give up your freedom of thinking, you have to become blind; you cannot see

because things may be different from your dead ideology which was decided hundreds of years before.

You should watch.... Just now you are listening to me. Are you aware that you are listening? Separate the function of listening, and be a witness also that your mechanism of listening is functioning and you are just a witness watching it. This separation is of ultimate urgency, because we have to separate all the garbage that has gathered around the witness, so the witness becomes absolutely free, in the present, having no ideology, having no prejudice, having nothing -- just an empty mirror. Then its capacity to reflect the truth is immense. Then its capacity to reflect the beauty is immense.

KYOZAN COMMENTED TO ISAN: "THIS IS A CASE OF WIDE CAUSE AND EFFECT CONSCIOUSNESS WITHOUT AWARENESS OF THE FUNDAMENTAL UPON WHICH ONE SHOULD RELY."

This man has turned his head, but he is not aware what he has done and why he has done it.

I have told you the story many times about Gautam Buddha. One day, walking on the road from one town to another, he was talking to Ananda. A fly sat on his forehead, and just as you do automatically, he remained engaged in talking to Ananda and shooed the fly. Then he suddenly stopped, and he again raised his hand, with great grace, and moved the hand. Ananda was absolutely puzzled. He said, "The fly is gone. What are you doing?" He said, "I did that act mechanically. I continued to talk to you and I left the functioning mind, the automatic mind to do the work of shooing the fly. But I was not aware. I did

it, but without any original awareness. Now I am doing it as I should have done it."

Another time he was passing through a village, and thousands of people were against him, as it is bound to be. Only little people are respectable; great people are greatly condemned. The enemies had gathered and they started abusing him in as ugly language as possible. He listened, standing silently, just like Basho. Those people felt a little embarrassed that he was not answering anything.

Buddha said, "You just complete your thing, because I have to go to the other town. And for you to contemplate a thing... In the previous town people love me and they had brought sweets and flowers and many presents. I cannot carry them -- it is not possible for me to carry things -- so I told those people to go back and distribute all these sweets and flowers to the people of the village from me.

"Now I ask you -- you have come with abuse, ugly words, nasty expressions. I don't accept them. You have come too late. You should have come ten years ago and there would have been bloodshed. These hands are of a warrior. Ten years ago, if a single word that you have said to me had been uttered, all these heads would be rolling on the ground. But fortunately you have come a little late. Now I don't function as an automatic machine. I can see you are ignorant people, I can see your unconsciousness -- and unless I take your abuse, you cannot give it to me.

"You will have to take all this garbage that you have brought back home. What will you do with it? -- distribute it on my behalf to the whole village. And if something is left to say, when I am returning again by the same road, I will make it a point to stay here one day. You can blame

me, you can tell as many lies, complaints as you want, but remember, unless I take them, your work is absolutely futile. You are talking to the skies. Not even a scratch has happened to me by your talk. I simply enjoyed it. Thank you." And he moved on.

Ananda, his disciple -- because he was also a warrior, and a cousin-brother of Gautam Buddha -- said, "I was forgetting completely your whole idea of compassion and kindness and love. I was getting ready to cut off their heads. I was just looking for my sword -- but I could not do anything in your presence. I had forgotten completely."

Ananda remained unenlightened until Buddha's death. He became enlightened after Gautam Buddha's death, the next day. And Gautam Buddha had said, "You will remain unenlightened while I am alive. Your attachment to me is a barrier. Your love towards me is a barrier. You cannot forget that you are my cousin-brother. That prevents you from becoming a disciple, so your disciplehood is just hypocrisy. And I know you are helpless, you cannot do anything. You try to do everything, but trying to do is one thing, and its arising spontaneously is another."

And the strange thing is that it actually happened the day Buddha died. The next day, Ananda did not move from the place where he was sitting the whole day without food, without water. Everybody wanted to help him. It was such a shock, because he had been for forty-two years continuously in service, day and night, never bothering about himself, but Buddha should have all the comforts possible. Perhaps the shock was too much. He had closed his eyes and was just sitting like a stone statue. But nobody dared to disturb him either. It was too delicate a matter.

Only by the evening of the next day he opened his eyes and he said, "After all he was right. Now you can cut off my head, but you will not scratch my consciousness."

So the functioning consciousness is one thing; everybody has it. You have to find out the deeper original witness which can witness your body, your mind, your thoughts, your actions, and still remain far away from any attachment or judgment. This discovery is the greatest discovery in the history of consciousness. No discovery of science or of any other subject, mathematics, or logic, or philosophy -- no discovery can be bigger, greater, with more splendor, with more ultimate categorical character than the discovery of the witness. The witness makes you a buddha.

ISAN OBSERVED: "IT IS A DROP OF LION'S MILK WHICH WILL CURDLE SIX GALLONS OF DONKEY'S MILK."

He is saying that the original consciousness, even a small drop of it, is so valuable that it will fill oceans. Even a single moment of original consciousness, a simple and single encounter with yourself, and you will never be the same again. You will be a totally new man -- the new man I talk about every day, just to remind you that the new man is ready to be born within you. It just needs a little more witnessing.

Witnessing is nourishment to the pregnant buddha in you. And as your nourishment goes deeper and deeper every day, one day you will suddenly see: you don't have to go to the center; the buddha has come to meet you on the circumference. Suddenly one day you may wake up as a buddha, and with that awakening the whole world changes

its color. Things take a different beauty, a different sacredness, a different grace. Sounds become sweeter and more musical. Small wild flowers become as valuable as any lotuses or roses.
To be a buddha is not only a revolution within you, it is a revolution in your very conception of the world, of relationships, of love, of friendship. The revolution is total. It changes all your perceptivity, all your conceptuality. It changes all your old mechanical habits. It makes you for the first time not a robot.

ONCE, ISAN COMMENTED TO KYOZAN: "THE WHOLE DAY WE ARGUED ABOUT ZEN AND WHAT DID WE GET OUT OF IT ALL?" -- AT WHICH KYOZAN DREW A LINE IN THE AIR.
ISAN OBSERVED: "IF IT WERE NOT I, SOMEONE WOULD BE DECEIVED."
Kyozan has answered with great clarity. The whole day discussing about Zen is just like making a line in the air. Discussions can't lead you, they don't have the potential to lead. Words lead to other words and it is a vicious circle. You can go on with argumentation, but it will not lead you to the center of your being, so it is as futile as a signature in the sky. While you are making the signature, the signature is already erased.
Isan said, "You are perfectly right -- because I can see, I have the eyes to see the invisible. But anybody else would have been deceived. He would have thought that something has been attained, something is attained by discussion; just he is not able to understand what this line is. Even this gesture of making the line is a disturbance. You should

have been absolutely silent, because nothing is attained, not even a line in the sky. If anybody was in my place, there is a possibility he may have been deceived -- that if you go on discussing, slowly slowly you will attain to Zen, you will attain to buddhahood.

"As far as I am concerned," Isan said, "it is perfectly right, because I can see a line in the sky means nothing -- but anybody else could have been deceived."

This is all the process of preparing a successor. Kyozan is going to be the successor of Isan. Isan is giving him all the possibilities that he will have to encounter. Just to be enlightened is not enough. A mere enlightenment will give you all the joys of the world, but you will become absolutely dumb. You will not say anything, you will not find any way to express.

Before enlightenment the master has to prepare the people who are going to succeed him, to make them more articulate, to make them more able to transform the wordless into words, the absolutely silent into songs, the absolutely unmoving into a dance. Only then will he be able to convey something and may be of help to the blind humanity.

Because of this fact, Buddha has divided his enlightened people in two categories. They both have the same height -- there is no quality of lower or higher -- they both belong to the same cosmic reality, the fundamental nature. But he has made two categories: one category he calls the arhatas -- the arhatas are the ones who become enlightened and remain silent -- and the second category he has called bodhisattvas. They also become enlightened, but their work

is to convey something, some device, some hints about their experience to people.

Arhatas are called hinayana, a little boat in which one man can row and go to the other side. Of course he reaches the other shore. And bodhisattvas he has called the mahayana; it is a great ship in which thousands of people can move to the other shore. The other shore is the same, but the bodhisattva helps many. The arhata is not articulate; he is a simple, nice, utterly humble person, but will not utter a single word of what he has attained. It is too much for him to say anything. He is completely contented, why should he speak? And anyway, everybody has to find his own way, so why unnecessarily harass people? The arhata has his own standpoint.

Buddha used to argue with the arhatas and the bodhisattvas, because both kinds of people became enlightened in his own lifetime. It was a constant struggle. Arhatas have their point: you cannot deny it, that everybody has to find his own path, so it is not necessary to convey anything to them. That may become a hindrance. All the scriptures have become hindrances.

No arhata has written any scripture. He does not move even a single finger to point to the moon, because the danger is that people may cling to his finger thinking that this is the moon. He keeps himself completely silent. Don't think that he is uncompassionate; just compassion also has many ways of expression.

He is expressing his compassion by not interfering in your life, and he is showing his trust that existence will bring you somehow -- if not today, then tomorrow, if not tomorrow, then next life. But there is eternity available, so

what is the hurry? "And if anybody is intelligent enough, he can see my small boat moving towards the other shore. That is enough of a hint. If he cannot understand that, he cannot understand anything else."
So Buddha finally allowed two categories of the same height, without any comparison of lower and higher. "Arhatas," he said, "you go on your way silently." And to bodhisattvas, who were ready to try, he said, "What is the harm? You have become enlightened, you cannot lose it -- there is no way of losing it -- so what is the harm in trying a little effort at provoking people and challenging people, creating a great urge and thirst in them? You may work on thousands and perhaps one may be ready, but even that is great compared to the ignorance of the whole earth. In the darkest night even a small candle glowing... its light and splendor is great, because it may give the indication to others to find candles; why live in darkness?"
Bodhisattvas moving in the masses are like torches, with a joy and with a dance and with a grace. They will create an urge, a deeply repressed hunger and appetite for the ultimate.

Soseki wrote:
A FEW PUFFS OF WHITE CLOUD
DRIFT AROUND THE MOUTH OF THE CAVE,
WITHOUT HINDERING MY DHARMA FRIEND
WHEN HE COMES TO KNOCK AT MY DOOR.
I'VE NEVER FOUND A WAY
TO HIDE MY DOING NOTHING,
DAY AFTER DAY.
WE JOIN HANDS AND WALK BACK AND FORTH

BACK AND FORTH.

A tremendously mysterious statement, but very simple. Sometimes simplicity is more mysterious than complexity.
A FEW PUFFS OF WHITE CLOUD...
Just visualize, because Zen poems are not for reading, but seeing. Just visualize a cave: A FEW PUFFS OF WHITE CLOUD DRIFT AROUND THE MOUTH OF THE CAVE, WITHOUT HINDERING MY DHARMA FRIEND.
Who is the dharma friend? We have been calling him the buddha. These white clouds cannot prevent my buddha WHEN HE COMES TO KNOCK AT MY DOOR. I HAVE NEVER FOUND A WAY TO HIDE MY DOING NOTHING DAY AFTER DAY.
He is saying that these clouds cannot prevent my being a buddha. The knock does not come from the outside; you have not heard the knock that comes from inside. The buddha wants to come to the circumference. Enough is enough. He has lived hidden in the center of your being for lives, for centuries, for millennia. A day comes that he also wants to see the sunrise and the sunset and the starry night and all the beautiful flowers of the world.
The meditator finally one day hears the knock from inside. You have heard only knocks from the outside, but you will hear one day, in the middle of the night, somebody knocking from inside. It is a very strange experience. Don't be afraid, it is your dharma friend. It is your very being that is saying, "Now you are ready, open the doors, allow me to come out. In your activities, in your gestures, in your words, in your silences -- now let me take over."

So if sometimes you hear the knock, don't misunderstand. Anando hears the knock. She thinks somebody -- particularly me -- is knocking on her door. And I am closed in my room and the key is with Nirvano; I cannot get out from there. And Anando... I again and again try to convince her, so she started thinking, "Perhaps Maitreya, who has died, is knocking." Because he used to live by her side, he was her neighbor and great friend, exchanging newspapers. "Perhaps in the night, lying in the cold grave, once in a while he wants to know what is happening in the world. He may be knocking, that is possible."

But as far as I understand the main door is closed, everything is closed. The knock is coming from inside, but because you have never heard it coming from inside, the misunderstanding arises that it is coming from outside.

So Anando, remember next time the knock comes, it is not coming from outside or from any ghost, holy or unholy. All kinds of ghosts are here, but it is your own being that is knocking. Don't repress it, don't try to avoid it. Listen to it. What does it want? It wants to come out. Your being wants to come out in the world with all its glory.

Soseki is saying, "Nothing can prevent the friend when he knocks at my door."

Of course Soseki is worried, "What will he think? -- because I HAVE NEVER FOUND A WAY TO HIDE MY DOING NOTHING, DAY AFTER DAY; I simply go on doing nothing." A small worry arises, "What will the buddha think about it? What kind of a lazy fellow, so lousy, doing nothing, day after day...?"

But finally WE JOIN HANDS AND WALK BACK AND FORTH, BACK AND FORTH, from the center to the

circumference, from the circumference to the center. By and by you and the buddha become one, there are not two beings.
As you become more silent, more indefensible, more vulnerable, as you open yourself completely, those two hands are your own. Then begins a new dance, a dance whose beauty cannot be described. Then begins a drunkenness which is not of this world. You can only call it divine wine; that's what Sufis have called it.

Question 1
Maneesha has asked:
OUR BELOVED MASTER,
JUST BEFORE DROPPING OFF TO SLEEP EACH NIGHT I SILENTLY REPEAT THE WORD `WITNESSING' TWENTY TIMES, RECALLING THE SPACE ITSELF AS I DO SO. INEVITABLY, THE FIRST OR SECOND THOUGHT ON WAKING IS THE REMEMBRANCE TO WITNESS.
WHAT IS HAPPENING? IS THE MIND BEING HYPNOTIZED TO REMEMBER THE WITNESS?

Maneesha, the first thing: you should not count twenty times, you should go on repeating, you should fall asleep repeating. Then it will not be the first or second thought; it will be absolutely the first thought when you will wake up, if you continue repeating `witnessing' and also creating the space -- not just the word `witnessing', but the space that comes around the word that you experience in your meditation. With that space and the word, you simply go on. Don't count, don't be so miserly -- twenty times...

It is good that Ma Tzu is not here in my place, otherwise from here he would have jumped right on Maneesha and made her a lifelong witness -- dead or alive, it does not matter. You are doing rightly. Don't call it hypnosis, because that word has been condemned by Christianity. It is a beautiful word and the whole process is beautiful, but still, because you have been brought up as a Christian it is very difficult to get rid of your upbringing.

So if you call it hypnosis, immediately the Christian mind will say you are doing something wrong. Forget about hypnosis; it is meditation. You are simply trying to make the mind remember that as you will be waking up, the first thought should be of witnessing and the whole space of witnessing. It is a beautiful process.

If you go on repeating the word and the space, overlapping the sleep, it enters into your sleep. You fall asleep, but your deeper mind goes on repeating the word and the space. The whole night becomes a meditation. In the morning, obviously, it is going to be the first thought, because the whole night it has been there as an undercurrent.

But don't call it hypnosis, although there is nothing wrong in hypnosis; it is another name of meditation. But Christianity has done such damage to the world that a great phenomenon is being avoided which can reveal many mysteries in man, which can cure many mental diseases. But just because of Christianity -- and other religions have also started imitating, because unfortunately Christian nations became great empires around the world. So even though the countries were not Christian, their education pattern, the whole climate that the Christian empire created

has entered into Hindus, into Mohammedans, into Buddhists.

The disaster has not been only to Christians, the disaster has been worldwide -- but to the Christians more so, and particularly for Maneesha. She has been trained in Christian schools to be a nurse, because nursing is a virtue, taking care of the sick is a great virtue; you will be rewarded very much in the other world.

So the more people get sick, the better, particularly for Christians. The more people are orphans, the better for Mother Teresa, for Pope the Polack to convert them to Christianity. The more poverty spreads in the world, the better for Christianity, because only the poor will be converted.

No rich Buddhist can even consider in his dreams to be converted to Christianity. Christianity is such an ordinary religion, so childish and so stupid that no cultured Hindu, or Mohammedan, or Christian -- yes, I include the intelligent Christian also -- is persuaded by the Christian theology. He simply formally maintains that he is a Christian.

I was in Greece. Amrito is here; I asked her what percentage the Greek Orthodox Church has in the country. She told me that nearabout ninety percent of the people are Greek Orthodox Christians, but only four percent of Christians ever attend church.

What about those other eighty-five percent? Just formal Christians. Any intelligent person cannot belong to a third-rate religion like Christianity. And it depends on the poor, on the orphans -- and just to create more poor and more orphans, it is against birth control.

It is a strange phenomenon, seeing the world situation, that the population will kill itself; man will be killing man, eating man. A moment is going to come by the end of this century when the whole humanity will become cannibals due to the courtesy of Christianity.

Maneesha carries the deep unconscious upbringing of a Christian.

So don't use the word hypnosis. Otherwise it is a beautiful word, as beautiful as meditation. It is synonymous, but it is better to avoid it. You meditate and you don't count, because if you are counting, who is meditating? If you are counting, who is witnessing? Don't count, because in counting your witness will be lost. The space of witnessing will be lost.

And what is the hurry? -- the sleep will come on its own accord. You simply go on enjoying the space of witnessing, and let the sleep merge with it. You will hear a faraway echo for a few moments and then you will forget all about witnessing. But it will continue as an undercurrent. You can turn your six or eight hours of sleep into a tremendously fruitful meditation.

And the sign that it has been successful is that the first thought as you open your eyes -- or even before you open your eyes, just as you become aware that sleep is finished -- the first thing that you will encounter will be the last thing that you left before you went into sleep. That means there is a connection; it remained continuously flowing underneath, from when you were awake in the evening to when you wake up again in the morning.

You are doing a beautiful meditation. Just two things you have to drop: don't count, and don't call it hypnosis.

Now it is Sardar Gurudayal Singh's time. Put the light on him! Right! Just look at his turban. He comes with such a great joy. Once he brought a turban for me too. He wanted me to come to the auditorium with the turban.
I said, "This will be too much! The government is already suspecting that I am creating chaos in Punjab. I don't go out of my room, and government detective agencies are continually inquiring what my position is about the Punjab problem. If I come with this multidimensional turban, it will create great difficulty unnecessarily."
But he comes like a bridegroom to celebrate. I have to find jokes for him. I don't know... he is very ancient, any day he can pop off. But we will keep him stuffed with the turban in his place -- that is a promise -- because without him I would not like to tell any jokes!

Nancy Reagan is having a confidential chat with her best friend, Hester Mindbender, next to the White House swimming pool.
"Life is terrible," sobs Nancy into her Pineapple Kool-Aid. "Ever since Ronald became four hundred per cent impotent, there is no happiness in my life!"
"Now wait a minute," says Hester. "One hundred percent impotent is bad enough -- but four hundred per cent impotent? He must be really rotten!"
"You don't understand," whines Nancy. "He's been one hundred per cent impotent ever since John Wayne's horse kicked him in the balls, in the cowboy movie, The Big Muddy. But last week," continues Nancy, "he fell out of his wheelchair, and broke both his hands and bit his tongue!"

The bells of the Vatican in Rome ring out a slow and dull message: "Pope the Polack is dying."
In Saint Peter's Square, the faithful Catholics gather to pray for their Polack pontiff, and Cardinal Catsass starts to perform a special ceremony.
"Listen," says Catsass to the crowd, "I want some of you sheep to donate a part of your life to God's faithful Polack -- I mean, pope. Pray before God that he will take a piece of your life and give it to our own Pope the Polack."
Mrs. Chlorex steps forward, raises her arms and cries out, "I will give a week of my life for our Polack pope!"
There are muffled cheers in the congregation. Then Father Fumble steps forward. "I offer two days of my life for Pope the Polack!" he cries.
The crowd sighs its approval.
Just then, Moishe Finkelstein and a bunch of Jewish tourists enter and immediately Moishe starts waving his arms around and shouts, "I offer twenty years of my...!"
"What?" interrupts his friend, Hymie. "Are you crazy? So much? -- and you are a Jew!"
Moishe looks at Hymie and continues, "... of my mother-in-law's life."

Every Friday, Nellie Nutzo escapes from the Sunnyvale Insane Asylum, and streaks naked throughout the forest surrounding the institution.
And every Friday, Loony Larry, Mad Melvin, and Crazy Karl watch her take off her clothes and disappear through the fence.

And every Friday, Attendant Eggski, the asylum guard, sends the three loonies to bring back the naked Nellie. This time the three loonies are gone for a long time, so Attendant Eggski decides to go look for them. He enters the forest and immediately naked Nellie Nutzo streaks by him with a wide grin on her face. Then Eggski sees Loony Larry and Crazy Karl come chasing right behind her in hot pursuit.
A couple of minutes later, Mad Melvin comes huffing and puffing along, carrying a bucket full of sand in each hand.
"Hey, wait a minute, Melvin!" cries Eggski. "What are you doing, running with those buckets of sand? How the hell are you going to catch Nellie that way?"
"Well," gasps Mad Melvin, out of breath. "It is my turn to carry the sand, because I caught her last week!"

You will get it in the right time!

Nivedano...

(Drumbeat)

(Gibberish)

Nivedano...

(Drumbeat)

Be silent. Close your eyes. Feel your body to be completely frozen.

Now look inwards with your total consciousness, with an urgency as if this is the last moment of your life on earth. Only with this urgency can you reach in a quantum leap from the circumference to the center.
Deeper and deeper... as you start reaching towards the center, the whole climate of Buddha Auditorium changes. A great serenity, a silence starts descending with great flowers of joy and peace.
Just remember one thing: at the center you are nothing but the witness -- the witness of the body, the witness of the mind, and the witness of all the splendor that you will experience at the center. At the center you are all buddhas. Buddha Auditorium is a gathering place for buddhas.
This moment you are joined with your eternity. This moment you are no more. The Buddha Auditorium has become a lake of pure consciousness without any ripples. Rejoice in your blessedness, because the whole world has forgotten the beauty of the source of life, the blissfulness of the original face, the tremendous blissfulness and benediction of disappearing in the ocean just like a dewdrop slipping from the lotus leaf into the ocean and becoming the ocean.

To make it absolutely clear,
Nivedano...

(Drumbeat)

Relax. But go on remembering that you are a witness. The body is not you, the mind is not you. You are nothing but a

pure witness. That is the only thing in you which is immortal; everything else is just mud.
The evening was beautiful on its own accord, but you have contributed tremendous beauty and grace by being at the source of being. You have made it a memorable moment.
You are witnessing the firecrackers all around... they are in the memory of a great meditator, Mahavira. He attained to enlightenment on the night when there is no moon. That night is coming soon. And the festival of lights in India is in the memory of Mahavira. He attained to enlightenment. Enlightenment is nothing but a festival of lights.
You are carrying within you the buddha with all its glory and splendor. Your whole life work is to bring the buddha from the hidden center to the circumference of your activities, to your songs, to your dances, to your ordinary activities and functions. Hand in hand, bring the buddha back, and soon you will find you are melting slowly and the buddha is taking your place.
The great day of festival is when you are no more and only the buddha is. Collect this beautiful space and the flowers that are showering on you, because soon Nivedano will be calling you back.
Be prepared.
Persuade the buddha to come with you. He has never failed anyone. He is always ready to come -- just a little graceful invitation, a prayerful approach.

Nivedano...

(Drumbeat)

Come back, but come as buddhas, with great silence, peace, serenity, grace.
Sit down in your places just for a few moments to remember what it has been going to the center -- what it was like, the taste of it, and what golden path you have followed back and forth, because you have to follow that path. It will become smaller and smaller every day, and one day suddenly, out of nowhere, the center and the circumference have become one.
You are the circumference; the buddha is the center. The day they meet together, the new man is born. And the new man will be the glory of the world. The new man will be the splendor of the world. The new man will create a new world spontaneously. The new man is the only hope.

Okay, Maneesha?
Yes, Beloved Master.

Isan: No Footprints in the Blue Sky

Chapter #7

Chapter title: Blue sky
1 December 1988 pm in Gautam the Buddha Auditorium

OUR BELOVED MASTER,
ON ONE OCCASION, TWO ZEN MONKS CAME FROM A RIVAL COMMUNITY AND, ARRIVING AT ISAN'S MONASTERY, COMMENTED: "THERE IS NOT A MAN HERE WHO CAN UNDERSTAND ZEN."

LATER, WHEN ALL THE MONKS WERE OUT GATHERING FIREWOOD, KYOZAN SAW THEM BOTH RESTING. HE PICKED UP A PIECE OF FIREWOOD AND SAID TO THE TWO: "CAN YOU TALK ABOUT IT?"
BOTH WERE SPEECHLESS, AT WHICH KYOZAN COMMENTED: "DO NOT SAY THAT THERE IS NO ONE HERE WHO CAN UNDERSTAND ZEN."
WHEN KYOZAN GOT BACK TO THE MONASTERY, HE SAID TO ISAN, "TODAY, I EXPOSED TWO ZEN MONKS."
"HOW?" ISAN ASKED, AND KYOZAN TOLD HIM OF THE EXCHANGE.
ISAN COMMENTED: "I HAVE NOW EXPOSED YOU AS WELL."

Maneesha, the Zen encounter is not that of words. The zencounter is a communion in silence. When two Zen masters meet, whoever speaks first has fallen from his status. Days may pass by; they may eat together, they may look around at the beauty in the sunset and in the morning and in the starry night, but nobody is going to say a single word. Not saying a single word and remaining just a mirror...
The mirror never says anything about the reflection, neither does the lake. The moon may be beautiful, the moon is reflected; the lake should dance with joy.
Similar is the case with consciousness. At its ultimate peak words are left far below, as if you have risen above the clouds. The moment you bring any word in, you have spoiled the whole communication.

Zen is the only teaching in the world which discards absolutely words, language, scripture. This small anecdote will show it to you. It does not seem to have much meaning on the surface, but in the depths it has all the meaning that truth can have, that beauty can have, that God can have. The anecdote is simple. Zen does not believe in complexity, in unnecessary linguistic jargon. It points to the fact directly, without even taking the help of words, because words can never help you. In fact the word is the barrier. Remove the word, allow the no-word, no-mind state, and everything is as crystal clear, clean as it has been since eternity. Just your eyes were clouded with words... your minds have gathered so much rubbish, which you call religious. In fact, all rubbish is religious, and vice versa. The function of Zen is just to cut all this rubbish like a sword, in a single blow, without hesitation, and the whole sky is yours, and the whole expanse of the universe is yours.

ON ONE OCCASION, TWO ZEN MONKS CAME FROM A RIVAL COMMUNITY AND, ARRIVING AT ISAN'S MONASTERY, COMMENTED: "THERE IS NOT A MAN HERE WHO CAN UNDERSTAND ZEN." There were rival monasteries of Zen. It started the day Buddha died: thirty-two schools immediately arose, and all those thirty-two schools were saying something essentially true -- but it was incomplete truth. Perhaps it is not possible in language to say the whole truth. It has so many facets -- you can cover only one facet -- it is so engrossing, so enveloping that you forget that this is not the whole truth; you have just touched a corner.

After Gautam Buddha's death the first thing the monks were concerned about was to collect all the incidents, sayings, parables, for the future centuries -- but they could not agree with each other. Amongst them were one hundred enlightened monks and even they were not ready to agree with each other. The ultimate outcome was thirty-two schools, and then branches and sub-branches... and Buddhism became a vast tree of much foliage.

So don't think that rival monasteries are enemies to each other. The word `rival' will give you a wrong impression. Rival monasteries are simply saying that "This is the way we have found the truth." They are not denying that your way is right or wrong; they are not saying anything about your way. And it was a great educational method: masters even used to send their disciples to the rival masters, simply for the sake that "You should know that truth has other aspects too; I have no monopoly over it."

This is a very different and very compassionate effort. Ordinarily in the world the Christian will not send his disciples to learn from a Mohammedan Sufi, or a Buddhist monk. It is already accepted that "We have got the truth. If anybody else proclaims he has got the truth, he is wrong." Christianity and Hinduism, Mohammedanism and Judaism, have fallen very low. You can proclaim your truth but you cannot claim monopoly over truth, and everybody is claiming the monopoly.

The Christian can accept that Buddha may have realized truth, "but our way is far better, far shorter." He is simply conceding because he wants a coexistence in the world. Coexistence accepts the rival but does not allow the rival

the same superiority as he goes on carrying in his own heart: others are also good, but not so good.

Zen has taken from the very beginning a very different approach, more human, more existential, more truthful. Zen does not want the truth to adjust with itself; it wants itself to be adjusted to truth. The man of Zen is ready to give everything -- all his conditionings, all his scriptures, all his statues he is ready to throw. And he is aware that truth is such a big phenomenon that nobody can claim its totality.

We are accustomed to Aristotelian logic -- which is a very poor logic, because it allows only yes or no. It is simple, clear. If somebody asks you, "What do you think about God?" either you say, "Yes, God is," or you say, "No, God is not." Alas, reality is not so simple.

Gautam Buddha's logic has four divisions, not two. If you ask Buddha about God, his logic is fourfold. He will say, "Yes, God is"; "No, God is not"; "Yes and no both," and the fourth, anirvachaniya, avyakhya -- that which cannot be said.

Now this will look very confusing; you will not be able to get any right direction where to go. Yes or no or both, or that which cannot be said...

Mahavira went even further. His logic is the ultimost -- sevenfold logic. Yes, no, both, that which cannot be said -- these four are accepted by Buddha. Mahavira goes a little deeper: yes and that which cannot be said; no and that which cannot be said, and the seventh, just the unsayable.

These differences are very indicative. They show that these people are not concerned about philosophy, they are more concerned to bring as much truth to you from as many sides as possible. That's why the last point is always

anirvachaniya -- that which cannot be said. You have to go to the place within you where no word can ever reach, and from that point you cannot bring any explanation. You can bring an experience. You will be transformed, you will be reborn, but you cannot bring a philosophy from there. You will be a new being, a new joy, a new laughter. New flowers will blossom in you, but all that you can do is sing, dance, play on your flute. Words are the lowest as far as expression is concerned.

ON ONE OCCASION, TWO ZEN MONKS CAME FROM A RIVAL COMMUNITY AND, ARRIVING AT ISAN'S MONASTERY, COMMENTED: "THERE IS NOT A MAN HERE WHO CAN UNDERSTAND ZEN."
Obviously, the ordinary mind always thinks, "I am superior, I am more intelligent. I have more of truth."
LATER, WHEN ALL THE MONKS WERE OUT GATHERING FIREWOOD, KYOZAN SAW THEM BOTH RESTING. HE PICKED UP A PIECE OF FIREWOOD AND SAID TO THE TWO: "CAN YOU TALK ABOUT IT?"
BOTH WERE SPEECHLESS, AT WHICH KYOZAN COMMENTED: "DO NOT SAY THAT THERE IS NO ONE HERE WHO CAN UNDERSTAND ZEN."
You cannot even explain wood on fire; what can you say about firewood?
One of the most important philosophers of this century, G.E. Moore, has written a book, WHAT IS GOOD? He was concerned his whole life with the meaning of good. His final conclusion is -- after two hundred and fifty pages

of long discussions about good -- the conclusion at the end is that good is indefinable.
That's what Buddha is saying: anirvachaniya. That means indefinable. That is what Mahavira is saying: avyakhya -- indefinable.
But after two hundred and fifty pages of very complex argumentation, at the very end he says that you cannot define anything. For example if somebody asks you, "What is yellow?" what are you going to say? You will say, "Yellow is yellow," but that is not much of an answer. You will be left speechless as you come closer to reality. Even words like `yellow' become indefinable. Firewood? -- what can you say about it? What can you say that has not been said before?
The two monks remained SPEECHLESS, AT WHICH KYOZAN COMMENTED: "DO NOT SAY THAT THERE IS NO ONE HERE WHO CAN UNDERSTAND ZEN. Take your words back."
WHEN KYOZAN GOT BACK TO THE MONASTERY, HE SAID TO ISAN, the master, "TODAY, I EXPOSED TWO ZEN MONKS."
"HOW?" ISAN ASKED, AND KYOZAN TOLD HIM OF THE EXCHANGE.
ISAN COMMENTED: "I HAVE NOW EXPOSED YOU AS WELL."
This is the point to be understood -- because Kyozan himself is on the way, he has not reached. What does he know about enlightenment? What does he know about exposing a person's ignorance? And if you start exposing people, and come with pride that you have done a great service...

He had come to master Isan to be praised. But Isan could not be deceived so easily. Isan said to him, "I HAVE NOW EXPOSED YOU AS WELL. You are as stupid as those two monks. Neither they know what silence is, nor do you know what silence is."

And truth is an absolutely silent state of being, so silent that you almost disappear, so silent that you become simply an awareness, no body, no mind -- all are left behind; there is just a small flame of awareness in the beautiful silence surrounding you. Nothing can be said about it.

Just a few days before you must have heard firecrackers all around. People don't understand, they have forgotten why we have these fireworks, firecrackers. On this night Mahavira had become enlightened. And Mahavira is an exception, because all the buddhas had become enlightened on the full moon night; Mahavira became enlightened on the no-moon night. Nothing can be said except thousands of candles in praise of Mahavira. All over the country millions of candles -- it is the Festival of Lights.

If somebody asks you, "What is truth?", show him your silence. Show him your fragrance, show him your love. Share with him your presence.

It is said about Lao Tzu... He used to go every morning for a walk in the mountains. A neighbor asked him, "Can I come with you?"

Lao Tzu said, "The road does not belong to me. But if you want to come with me, then there is a condition: you cannot speak a single word."

And the neighbor managed. He gained enough insight just by following into the deep forest in silence. Just the

presence of Lao Tzu slowly slowly became more and more intimate. Soon he understood why Lao Tzu had put the condition "no talk," because talk would have disturbed this great benediction, this great blissfulness that was arising from both the hearts -- these small flames, this radiation of light.

But one day the neighbor asked Lao Tzu, "A friend has come to stay with me for a few days. Can I bring him also with me?"

Lao Tzu said, "With the same condition."

But the friend was not aware that it was not to be taken casually. He kept silent as far as he could, but there were many moments when he was just going to say something and prevented himself. But when the sun started rising, it was so beautiful -- and the songs of the birds -- that he could not contain it. He forgot the condition, and he said, "What a beautiful morning!"

It was not much... but Lao Tzu looked at his neighbor. And back home Lao Tzu said, "Your friend cannot come with me. He talks too much."

The neighbor said, "He has only spoken one single sentence in two hours: `What a beautiful morning!'"

Lao Tzu said, "You only hear what he has said, you don't hear what he is talking inside and controlling. Because of him my whole morning has been contaminated. And if he feels the morning is beautiful... are we blind? We can also see the morning is beautiful; what is the point of saying it? To whom is he talking?"

There are moments when you suddenly feel an expansion of consciousness. It may be listening to great music, to

great poetry, or seeing a great painting, or just meditating, sitting silently, doing nothing.

Nobody can surpass Basho -- no poet in the whole world, in any language -- when he says, "Sitting silently, doing nothing, the spring comes and the grass grows by itself."

Just learn to be silent, not a single ripple in your consciousness, and you are a buddha. This small barrier of language is the only barrier. Otherwise, everybody is a buddha. Hence I say: it is very simple to be a buddha.

One day, seeing that the barrier is only language, I dropped it. And if spring comes for Basho, it comes for me too. If the grass grows by itself, then why bother? I simply settled in my buddhahood.

There is no need to make any effort; all efforts are to destroy efforts, to tire you, to bring you to a moment when you completely drop dead, tired -- "Enough of it!" That is the moment when a new life source, a new starry night, new roses start blossoming around you.

Soseki wrote:

ALL WORRIES AND TROUBLES
HAVE GONE FROM MY BREAST,
AND I PLAY JOYFULLY
FAR FROM THE WORLD.
FOR A PERSON OF ZEN,
NO LIMITS EXIST.
THE BLUE SKY MUST FEEL
ASHAMED TO BE SO SMALL.

Only a man of Zen, only a man of enlightenment can say that.

THE BLUE SKY MUST FEEL ASHAMED TO BE SO SMALL.

Your consciousness becomes so vast, and in that vastness, in that oceanicness, who cares about trivia, whether your tie is tied rightly or wrongly? Who cares about small things? And all our worries are about small things. You have never worried about anything great. Just look back and you will not find a single thing about which you can say, "It was great that I worried about it" -- just very small things.

Mulla Nasruddin used to purchase shoes which were too tight for him, one size too small. He was continually complaining and grumbling to everybody, "I will die with these shoes!"

People said, "Why don't you change them?"

When he came the next time to the shoe store to change them, he again asked for the same size. The shoemaker said, "Are you mad or something? That shoe is always going to give you problems."

Mulla Nasruddin said, "There is a great philosophy in it. I have so many problems; this shoe keeps me busy, and all other worries become small. I have to manage to walk in these shoes. The only way I know to avoid those other worries is to create a bigger worry. This is so simple. And in the night when I come home, and I take the shoes off... boy, what a relief! This shoe is my only hope to find some relief in life."

Question 1

Maneesha has asked:

OUR BELOVED MASTER,

DOES THE TIME THAT YOU ARE AWAY FROM US HAVE A SIGNIFICANCE OF ITS OWN IN YOUR WORK WITH US?

Maneesha, everything that is happening here has its own significance. You have to learn my presence and you have to learn my absence, and you have to come to a point where presence or absence don't matter. You are not going to be tied to my presence.

That's why Gautam Buddha said to his disciples, "If I come in your meditations, immediately cut off my head. Don't cling to me, otherwise I will become a barrier."

And the love between a disciple and a master is the most intimate, is the ultimate. You have to learn my absence; you have to rejoice my absence the same way as you rejoice my presence, because I cannot remain here forever. And don't postpone it, because any day...

My work is absolutely complete as far as I am concerned. If I am still carrying on, it is just out of my love for you. But you have to learn my absence, because the days of my presence will be shorter. Every day the days of my presence will become shorter; my days of absence will be longer.

I am not going to come again in the body; this is the last time. You have to become as silent, as loving, as meditative with me or without me. The difference between my absence and presence should completely be lost.

Question 2

Maneesha has asked another question:

OUR BELOVED MASTER,

THE STORY OF BUDDHA MECHANICALLY BRUSHING AWAY THE FLY IS PUZZLING. WAS IT STILL POSSIBLE FOR HIM TO DO SOMETHING WITHOUT BEING CONSCIOUS, SOMETIMES MECHANICAL? I THOUGHT ONCE ONE WAS ENLIGHTENED, ONE COULD NOT HELP BUT BE CONSCIOUS IN ALL THAT ONE DID, TWENTY-FOUR HOURS A DAY.

Maneesha, you have raised a right question.
I have spoken with Buddhist monks in their assemblies. The head of the Buddhists in India, Anand Kausalyayan, was very much puzzled by the story because it is not written anywhere. But even he could not ask the right question. He asked me, "Where is it written?"
I said, "That does not matter. You can write it!"
But he said, "The story is beautiful, makes the point of mechanical behavior and conscious behavior very clearly." But even he could not ask the right question.

Your question is far more significant. I was hoping someday somebody would ask. It is true that once a buddha you are always a buddha. Then how do I explain the story? This was a device for Ananda, who was following him. Even on the first occasion he was not mechanical, he just acted mechanically -- with full consciousness. And then he stopped, and again moved his hand.
Ananda said, "What are you doing? The fly is gone."
Buddha said, "The first time I did it mechanically; that was wrong. I continued to talk with you. I should have been more conscious and aware, more graceful, more loving in

shooing the fly. That's what I am doing now. The fly is not there, but what I should have done -- and I missed the situation -- I am making up for it."
As far as I know, Buddha could never be mechanical. He acted mechanically for the sake of Ananda to make the clear distinction between the conscious act and the unconscious act -- and he made it really beautifully. But it is not in Buddhist scriptures. What to do? -- the story is so beautiful that it should be.
In my book on DHAMMAPADA I have written it. After all, Buddha has not written anything. Anybody writing anything is writing after Gautam Buddha -- somebody one day after, somebody one year after. I am writing twenty-five centuries after! And a living river should move on to new territories, new pastures. The moment it stops flowing it becomes stagnant and dead.

Now comes the time for Sardar Gurudayal Singh. He has been waiting so long. Now he has come in his full glory, with the rainbow turban. I was worried whether I would see him. But he is a very stubborn guy: he is sitting in his place with his great turban, waiting for his time.

Pope the Polack has a terrible problem: he wets his bed. He gets so embarrassed by this habit that he goes to see Doctor Feelgood, the psychiatrist, in the hope of a cure.
"Sit down, your holiness," says Feelgood, "and tell me all about it."
"Well," says the Polack pope, "every night, when I go to sleep, I dream about this little red devil with horns and a

tail, who says to me, `Pope, now it is time to do a pee-pee.' And then, when I wake up, I find that I have wet my bed."
"That is very interesting," says the shrink, "but very simple to cure. Next time this little red devil comes into your dreams and tells you to urinate, just say, `No, Devil! I don't need to pee -- I don't want to pee -- so I won't!'"
"Great idea!" says Pope the Polack, and he thanks Feelgood and goes back to the Vatican. Sure enough, that night, when the Polack is asleep, the little red devil with horns and a tail comes into his dreams and says, "Hey, Pope, now it is time to pee-pee."

But the pope says, "No, Devil -- I don't need to pee -- I don't want to pee -- so I won't"
"A-Ha!" says the devil. "So you don't want to pee-pee? Okay then -- tonight you can do KA-KA!"

Father Finger and Old Father Fungus are trying out some new communion wine after Holy Mass in the church one night. An hour and two bottles later, they are feeling great, so Father Finger suggests that they go for a ride to the park. Off they go, Father Finger driving on his moped, carrying Old Father Fungus on the back -- both of them utterly drunk. They are speeding and weaving along the city streets like two little bats out of hell, when Father Finger holds up both his hands and shouts out, "Look! No hands!"
Just then they swerve past Police Officer Muldoon, who is cruising slowly along on his motorcycle.
When the cop pulls the two priests over, he smells the wine, and pulls out his notebook and pencil.

"That will be a fifty dollar fine, Father," says Muldoon. "Your hands were not on the handlebars, and you are drunk."
"But, officer!" slobbers Father Finger, "I was praying, so God took over the driving."
"Okay," smiles the cop, writing on his paper, "then that will be a one hundred dollar fine -- for driving with three drunks on a moped!"

Farmer Meadow-Muffin's young son Cyril comes running into the farmhouse one day, crying. His arms and legs are covered in bee-stings.
"What happened to you?" asks Farmer Meadow-Muffin.
"Well, Dad," howls Cyril, "I was just walking through the cow field, past the bee-hive, when all the bees flew out and stung me!"
"Nonsense!" says the farmer. "Bees don't sting for no reason. You must have been fooling around with their hive."
"No, Dad, really," sobs Cyril. "I was just walking past and they all flew out and stung me!"
"You are lying!" says Farmer Meadow-Muffin. "And to prove it, you can tie me naked to that apple tree next to the beehive and leave me there for the rest of the day. And by the evening I bet you that not one bee has stung me."
"Okay, Dad!" says Cyril, brightening up. And then he ties his naked father to the tree and goes off to play.
All through the day, Cyril hears his father shouting and screaming, but he leaves him there to teach him a lesson. That evening, Cyril goes along to release his father.

"What was all that shouting about, Dad?" he chuckles. "Did you get stung badly?"
"Not one bee touched me!" snaps Meadow-Muffin. "But you see that baby cow there? All day long she thought I was her mother!"

Nivedano...

(Drumbeat)

(Gibberish)

Nivedano...

(Drumbeat)

Be silent. Close your eyes. Feel your body to be completely frozen.
Now, look inwards with your total consciousness, and with an urgency as if this is your last moment of life.
Your center of being is not far away. Just all that you need is a total urgency.
Deeper and deeper, like a spear... the deeper you go into your being, the deeper you are going into existence.
This moment you are a buddha, and to be a buddha is to attain to the ultimate potential of your being. The seed comes to blossom in a blue lotus.
This very body the buddha, this very earth the lotus paradise.

Remain a witness. That is the only thing that is eternal in you. Everything is mortal except witnessing. Witnessing is another name of buddha.

To make it more clear,
Nivedano...

(Drumbeat)

Relax, but remain a witness. You are not the body, you are not the mind; you are pure consciousness. And soon you will find you don't have any limits.
This Buddha Auditorium becomes a lake of consciousness without ripples.
Gather as many flowers that are blossoming in the invisible around you, as much fragrance... And remember that this buddha has to come slowly slowly onto the circumference of your life, in your ordinary day-to-day work. Then even that work becomes meditation. Anything done with awareness is meditation.
Before Nivedano calls you back, gather as much of this pure space as possible. Bring with you the dance of it, the music, the poetry....

Nivedano...

(Drumbeat)

Come back, but show even in your coming back a grace, a beauty, a silence. Sit for a few moments remembering the experience you have gone through.

You have to become a buddha in your day-to-day affairs, twenty-four hours.
Living or dead, you have to be a buddha. Only the buddha does not die.
To be a buddha is your destiny.
There is no other blessing that goes higher.
There is no other ecstasy that goes wider.
There is no other blissfulness that goes deeper.
Meditation is the only revolution in the world. All other revolutions are fake.

Okay, Maneesha?
Yes, Beloved Master.

Isan: No Footprints in the Blue Sky

Chapter #8

Chapter title: Essential zen
2 December 1988 pm in Gautam the Buddha Auditorium

OUR BELOVED MASTER,
KYOZAN ONCE RETURNED TO ISAN TO INTERVIEW HIM. ISAN SAID TO HIM, "YOU ARE NOW CALLED A GOOD AND CLEVER TEACHER. HOW CAN YOU DISTINGUISH BETWEEN THOSE WHO COME FROM ALL PARTS AND KNOW IT, AND THOSE WHO DON'T KNOW IT; THE MASTERS WHO HAVE INHERITED IT, AND THOSE WHO HAVE NOT; THE PROFOUND LEARNING, AND THE MEANING LEARNING? EXPLAIN AND LET ME HEAR."

KYOZAN REPLIED, "KYOZAN HAS HAD THIS EXPERIENCE. WHEN MONKS COME FROM ALL DIRECTIONS, HE RAISES HIS STICK, AND ASKS THEM IF THIS IS EXPOUNDED WHERE THEY COME FROM OR NOT. FURTHER, HE SAYS TO THEM, LEAVING THIS ASIDE, `WHAT ARE THE OLD MASTERS WHERE YOU COME FROM TEACHING?'" ISAN ADMIRED HIM AND SAID, "THIS HAS ALWAYS BEEN THE CLAW AND FANG OF OUR SECT."

Maneesha, the silence here is so dense, one feels a little afraid even to utter a word. It may disturb the silent lake of your consciousness. But always remember that in the wake of words, silence is deepened. The higher the mountain, the greater will be the valley surrounding it. A great mountain cannot have a small valley. There is a tremendous balance in everything as far as nature is concerned.

The essential Zen is an effort to bring you to the language of existence that you have forgotten completely. You have forgotten completely the most important, and you are filled in your mind with all kinds of gibberish.

You may know, you may not know, that gibberish is not an English word. It comes from Persia, the old name of Iran, and it comes from a very mystical person, Jabbar, because he never spoke anything relevant. Not only was it irrelevant, there was no grammar, there were no words at all, but only sounds. Because of Jabbar, the name `gibberish' came into existence.

But Jabbar was saying something through his gibberish. He was saying, "All that we can say about existence is gibberish." He was very much in tune with existence.
It seems unbelievable that he had one thousand disciples. Sitting by his side, when he was silent they would be silent; when he would go into gibberish, they would go into gibberish -- and nearabout twenty-five people became enlightened. Not a word was said by Jabbar, nothing was heard by anybody.
You cannot write a treatise on Jabbar because he never spoke anything except gibberish. But he was a radiant man, a man who had come to flowering, whose spring had come, and who was not afraid to be vulnerable and open and receptive. He went along with the wind.
Zen has done the same from a different angle, but you must be aware of the fact that any authentic master -- to whatever age, to whatever country he belongs -- is not interested in preaching you a doctrine. His interest is to bring you in communion, in balance with the reality that surrounds you.
Zen has used many methods never known before. You cannot conceive in a Greek context the validity of any method of Zen. Even Socrates and Plato would have been at a loss if they had met Bodhidharma or Jabbar.
I always think what a hilarious meeting it would be: Jabbar meeting Socrates. Socrates was so logical, so rational. His honesty was exactly the same as Jabbar's; he was ready to risk his life for his truth, but still he did not rise, until the last moment of his life, to enlightenment. The day he dropped all knowledge, all wisdom, the day he dropped language as such, that very moment a tremendous silence

descended upon him. And those of you who are slowly slowly moving towards the great experience will become aware of it -- not because I say so, but because you experience it so.
How can you say anything about the tremendous silence that is here now? Our minds are preventing us... our minds are taking us away from the very center of our being. The mind is not interested at all in an interior exploration. It is absolutely committed to the outside and the objective.
Before I talk about Isan's sutra... because this sutra will be the last of this series and also this sutra is the last of Isan's life. This sutra ends exactly at the time Isan dies.
The death of a person indicates how he has lived, whether he has lived at all or not. You may be believing that you are living, but don't be so certain.
Every madman in all the madhouses in the world believes absolutely that he is not mad. He wonders why people consider him to be mad. Slowly slowly he comes to the conclusion that the world is mad: "Poor fellows, they cannot understand my state."

A man who had been crazy all his life went beyond the boundary. Small trips beyond the mind can be tolerated, but he went a little too far; he started saying that "I am dead."
Everybody laughed, everybody said, "This is too much. You have already been doing great things.... And how can you be dead? -- you are speaking!"
He said, "So what? Dead people speak."
They told him, "You are walking, you are eating, you are sleeping."

He said, "That does not prove that I am alive. That simply proves that I am vegetating. But as far as my deadness is concerned... I am absolutely certain."
They took the man finally to a psychoanalyst. The psychoanalyst said to the family, "Don't be worried. It will take a little time. You leave him with me. He has to come for a one hour session twice a week."
All this time, the madman who had now become dead was smiling.
The first question the psychoanalyst asked him was, "Why are you smiling?"
He said, "Strange... a single man is alive amongst a group who are all dead. But just to convince themselves that they are alive, they are trying to convince me that `You are also alive' -- and I have never seen anything living in me."
The psychoanalyst was at a loss himself, because this was an absolutely new case. He had never dealt with dead people, but he figured out a way. He took a knife and cut the madman's finger. Blood started coming out. The psychoanalyst said, "Have you ever heard that dead men don't bleed?"
The man said, "Yes. While I was alive I heard this saying."
The psychoanalyst felt great pride, but the madman said, "Don't be proud. It does not prove that I am not dead. It only proves that the proverb is wrong. Dead men do bleed. I am an example, a living example!"
After two, three sessions, the psychoanalyst was continuously thinking about the man. And slowly slowly a doubt started arising in him, "If somebody asks me to prove it, how am I going to prove that I am alive?"

That night he could not sleep. Next day was his session. He said to the man, "I will not charge you anything, but please leave me alone. You can find some other psychoanalyst -- they are a rupee a dozen -- because I am becoming suspicious about my own life. Rather than convincing you that you are dead, you are by and by convincing me that who knows? -- I may have died! Perhaps I am dreaming that I am alive."
What proof have you that you are not dreaming?

Death is the criterion in the tradition of Zen. How a man dies proves whether he has lived or not. Only a living man can die; you cannot afford to die if you have not lived.
I have heard about a great scholar. He became aware that he was alive only when he was dead. Then suddenly he realized, "My God! I used to be alive, and I never took any notice of it."
Particularly in Zen, the masters show the highest peaks of consciousness. Death is the criterion. If you can die gracefully, blissfully, almost dancingly, that proves that you have lived, and you have lived so deeply that you know that death is only the changing of the house.

KYOZAN ONCE RETURNED TO ISAN TO INTERVIEW HIM.
You will be surprised... That is another speciality in Zen, that disciples come to interview the master -- nowhere else. But Zen is very playful. Its playfulness is so deep that it takes nothing seriously.

KYOZAN ONCE RETURNED TO ISAN TO INTERVIEW HIM. ISAN SAID TO HIM, "YOU ARE NOW CALLED A GOOD AND CLEVER TEACHER. HOW CAN YOU DISTINGUISH BETWEEN THOSE WHO COME FROM ALL PARTS AND KNOW IT, AND THOSE WHO DON'T KNOW IT; THE MASTERS WHO HAVE INHERITED IT, AND THOSE WHO HAVE NOT; THE PROFOUND LEARNING, AND THE MEANING LEARNING. EXPLAIN AND LET ME HEAR."
KYOZAN REPLIED, "KYOZAN HAS HAD THIS EXPERIENCE. WHEN MONKS COME FROM ALL DIRECTIONS, HE RAISES HIS STICK, AND ASKS THEM IF THIS IS EXPOUNDED WHERE THEY COME FROM OR NOT. FURTHER, HE SAYS TO THEM, LEAVING THIS ASIDE, `WHAT ARE THE OLD MASTERS WHERE YOU COME FROM TEACHING?'"
ISAN ADMIRED HIM AND SAID, "THIS HAS ALWAYS BEEN THE CLAW AND FANG OF OUR SECT."

A few things to be noted.

Kyozan succeeded Isan. But to interview the master before he became enlightened shows his daringness, his courage. And it also shows the grace and greatness of Isan that he did not object to it: "You don't know anything about it, and you are trying to interview me?"

But without saying it, if you look at the whole thing, it becomes just the opposite. It is an interview not of Isan by Kyozan, but an interview by Isan of Kyozan. He did not say anything to hurt him, he did not reject the interview or say that "You are not of the quality yet; you have not

experienced your innermost core." Rather than rejecting, Isan accepts it and starts the interview himself.

KYOZAN REPLIED, "KYOZAN HAS HAD THIS EXPERIENCE..." because Isan has asked, "How do you teach people? And how do you know whether somebody knows or not? whether somebody is a master or only a pretender?" And Kyozan has forgotten completely that he has come to interview Isan, and he is being interviewed -- the craftsmanship of a great master.

KYOZAN REPLIED, "KYOZAN HAS HAD THIS EXPERIENCE. WHEN MONKS COME FROM ALL DIRECTIONS, HE RAISES HIS STICK, AND ASKS THEM IF THIS IS EXPOUNDED..."

He is not asking about the stick, he is raising the stick to indicate "thisness." Are you coming from a master who has explained to you "thisness," the present moment of splendor, the great moment of being nobody? -- because a master never hits a disciple unless a disciple is really able to be awakened by a single hit.

Kyozan said, "WHEN MONKS COME FROM ALL DIRECTIONS, HE RAISES HIS STICK, AND ASKS THEM IF THIS IS EXPOUNDED WHERE THEY COME FROM OR NOT. FURTHER, HE SAYS TO THEM, LEAVING THIS ASIDE, `WHAT ARE THE OLD MASTERS WHERE YOU COME FROM TEACHING?'"

In fact, if you have found a master you have found your home; there is nowhere to go. Or wherever you go you will find your master and nobody else.

When Gautam Buddha became enlightened his first words were strange: "Not only I am enlightened, the whole existence is enlightened with me. This music, this music of

silence, soundless, these flowers, invisible, falling all over the place -- I was just keeping my eyes closed. Today my eyes are open, but that does not make me superior. From the smallest blade of grass to the greatest star everything is in blissfulness."

Man has created only one thing: misery for himself and misery for others. We are great creators of misery. If someday nothing terrible happens to you, that day is wasted -- something terrible so that you can talk about it, rejoice about it, some great tragedy. People don't like to see comedies, people like to see tragedies.

When there is a war going on, everybody gets up early in the morning to find the newspaper, what is happening. Everybody looks fresh; something terrible is happening, so many thousands of people are dying. We have become so accustomed to tragedy, and comedy seems to be tasteless.

When you have found a master, you have found him. You can remain, you can go, but the master has settled in your heart.

Those who go on and on are simply indicating that they have not found the man who makes your heart dance. They have not clicked with somebody. They have not found a man of presence who engulfs you with love and joy, compassion and light, life and love, beauty and truth, and all that is divine in existence. Unless you have seen those two eyes in which all that is divine reflects, you have to go on in the hope that somewhere you may find.

But remember always, because you can miss a real master, that you have to be absolutely receptive, utterly open, with no doors closed, with no windows closed. The fresh breeze

comes with great fragrance, the coolness of it... the perfume of it is always available; just your doors were closed.
So if you don't find a master, don't think that there is no master. First, begin to see: Are you able to receive a master? Is your heart open? Is not your mind burdened with many kind of prejudices?
What are all your religions except prejudices? No man of intelligence can depend on birth; birth is accidental. You are born a Hindu, that does not make you a Hindu. You are born a Mohammedan, that does not make you a Mohammedan. Such a great phenomenon as religion cannot be left hanging on the accidental phenomenon of birth. You have to choose it. You have to find it. Everybody has to go into deeper search.
ISAN ADMIRED HIM....
Remember, admiration is not the real appreciation of a master. If Isan had given him a good slap, or a good stick, that would have been appreciation.
Our stickholder -- because I am a lazy man, I cannot carry the stick -- has come from Germany. Just show your stick and hit poor Maneesha! (NISKRIYA TAKES THE STICK AND TAPS MANEESHA ON THE HEAD. IT MAKES A LOUD, SHARP CLICK.)
Good!
ISAN ADMIRED HIM AND SAID, "THIS HAS ALWAYS BEEN THE CLAW AND FANG OF OUR SECT."
Seeing that Kyozan would not understand, he is not yet ripe, Isan avoided the stick.

ISAN TAUGHT FOR OVER FORTY YEARS DURING WHICH TIME HE GATHERED INNUMERABLE DISCIPLES. ON FEBRUARY 20TH, 853, HE WENT THROUGH A RITUAL ABLUTION, SEATED HIMSELF IN THE MEDITATION POSTURE AND, SMILING, DIED AT THE AGE OF EIGHTY-THREE. HIS STUPA WAS ERECTED ON MOUNT KUEI, HOME OF HIS MONASTERY.
THE EMPEROR GAVE HIM THE POSTHUMOUS TITLE TA YUAN (GREAT PERFECTION).
Isan must have worked hard in polishing an ordinary stone into a diamond. The whole glory and credit goes to Isan. He turned an ordinary man into a great perfection.
Kyozan does not show much insight, intelligence, meditativeness, but it is the compassion of the master to do his best. Forty years he worked on Kyozan. It is a long time, but for compassion neither time means anything nor space means anything. Isan succeeded in bringing him home.

I am reminded of a great emperor who dreamed one night that a great black shadow was standing before him. With trembling hands and throbbing heart, he asked, "Who are you?"
The shadow said, "That we will discuss later on. I have come to inform you that tomorrow evening as the sun will be setting you will die." And the shadow disappeared, and with the shadow the sleep also disappeared.
The king was perspiring. He called the attendant. In the middle of the night all the astrologers, palmists, prophets were called to interpret the dream: What does it mean?

They started looking in their great scriptures, "Is there any precedent?" There was no precedent at all, because death never informs anybody; it just comes without even knocking on your door.

The sun was rising. The old attendant of the emperor, who was almost like his father -- because his mother died early, and his father was so much engaged in wars that he had given the small child to this old servant to take care of... The servant had taken care perfectly, so although he was a servant, the emperor almost respected him like a father. He was a substitute father.

The old servant came close to him and said, "I am not a scholar, I am not an astrologer, and I am not an alchemist. I don't know anything about these great things. One thing I know: that you should not stay in this palace. Take our best horse and move as fast and far from the capital as possible. If possible enter into another kingdom.

"And as far as these scholars are concerned, they have never come to any conclusion -- never! They discuss and discuss and every argument leads to another argument, but in the end the hands are empty. So let them discuss. You should not wait, because once the sun has started rising, the setting will not be too far away. In the rising sun itself, the setting of the sun is intrinsic."

It appealed... so he left without saying anything to the great scholars, leaving them to confute each other and fight and argue. He took his best Arabian horse, told the horse, "We have to reach as far away as possible. It is a very critical moment." Horses and their lovers have a certain way of communicating, just as dogs have a certain way of communicating.

The horse started with full speed. They never stopped for a single moment even to drink water or to eat something. They were happy that before the sun set they had crossed the kingdom; they had reached into another kingdom. Outside the kingdom there was a great mango grove. The sun was already setting, and the king thanked the horse. He said, "I had no idea that you could go so fast. I knew that you were one of the greatest horses, but this speed..."
And just at that moment he felt a hand on his shoulder. He looked behind him and saw the same black shadow. The black shadow said to the horse, "I was also worried whether you would be able to come this great a distance or not, because the emperor is destined to die in this mango grove. I never inform people, there is no need. The need arose because the distance was so great, and there was no reason for him to leave the palace and to come to this mango grove. Just as the emperor is grateful to you, I am also grateful."

A beautiful story, but some deeper approach is needed. Mind always takes you far away. The servant was perfectly intelligent, rational -- far more intelligent than those so-called scholars. But mind is mind.
If an enlightened master had been there, he would have said, "It is time enough; you just go in. No horse is needed, you don't have to move a single inch outside. Just go in and there is no death. Death exists only for those who live their lives in the outside world. To those who have known their innermost core, death is just a shadow. It has no solidity, no substance, no reality."
But Isan continued to teach Kyozan for over forty years.

Enlightenment can happen in this very moment. It depends on your urgency, totality. Time is not a question, neither is causality. Nothing is needed for it to happen, because it is already there; you only have to turn your vision to look inside.
For forty-two years, Isan, a great compassionate master, worked on Kyozan, and finally managed for an almost dead man to become a buddha.
Isan's stupa -- stupa is the Buddhist word for a memorial -- still exists on Mount Kuei where after his enlightenment he established his monastery.
Certainly he must have been enlightened; his death shows it.
ON FEBRUARY 20TH, 853, HE WENT THROUGH A RITUAL ABLUTION, SEATED HIMSELF IN THE MEDITATION POSTURE AND, SMILING, DIED AT THE AGE OF EIGHTY-THREE. HIS STUPA WAS ERECTED ON MOUNT KUEI, HOME OF HIS MONASTERY.
THE EMPEROR GAVE HIM THE POSTHUMOUS TITLE TA YUAN (GREAT PERFECTION).

Soseki wrote:
ONCE IN A THOUSAND YEARS
THE UDUMBARA BLOSSOMS...
Udumbara is a metaphorical tree.
ONCE IN A THOUSAND YEARS
THE UDUMBARA BLOOMS.
IT HAS OPENED ITS AUSPICIOUS FLOWERS.
MANY LABORED TO BRING IT
FROM INDIA TO CHINA.

ITS HEADY FRAGRANCE LINGERS,
WITHOUT FADING,
AND IS NOT LOST
AMONG THE THOUSAND GRASSES,
THE COUNTLESS WEEDS.

The same fragrance reached to its crescendo in Japan. Anybody who realizes the fact of his being a buddha becomes the flower that blossoms once in thousands of years. And even if the body of the buddha dies, the fragrance remains. Those who have the right sensitivity can smell even this moment Gautam Buddha or Bodhidharma. It is not a question of time. Buddhahood is such an experience... in the body the buddha will die, but in the spirit he will float around you for eternities to come. He has melted in the universal and you can find him even this very moment. We are searching for him every moment. The buddha is our nature.

Question 1
Maneesha has asked:
OUR BELOVED MASTER,
IS WITNESSING A LEARNING OR A REMEMBERING?

Maneesha, it is both and it is both not.
It is both in the sense that in the beginning you have to learn to enter into your inner temple. And then you have to remember continuously, because to forget again and again is human. But as your remembrance becomes a silent

breathing in you, the moment you start breathing buddha in and out, then it is neither learning nor remembering.
It is simply you.
You have not achieved anything, you have not discovered anything; it has always been there. And whether you remember it or not, it will always remain there.
That's why Zen does not take things seriously. What does it matter? -- in this life or in some other life you are to become a buddha.
The buddha is the New Man.
He is the man of the future.
The whole human consciousness is moving towards buddhahood.
Strangely, it is already there within you, but you are not aware. Hence, a master can be helpful to you.
It is just like tickling you (THE MASTER MAKES TICKLING GESTURES TOWARDS US)... and you start laughing, and I have not tickled yet! (AGAIN HE MAKES THE MOVEMENT) ... And you will start feeling...(FOR THE THIRD TIME, HE STRETCHES HIS FINGERS TOWARDS US) the master's work is to tickle you. And it is a joy to tickle ten thousand buddhas!

Now it is time for Sardar Gurudayal Singh. He waits and waits for his time. If I go on continuing to tell jokes to you, one thing is certain: I may die, but Gurudayal Singh is not going to die. He will still wait.

At the end of the Sunday school class, the teacher, Miss Holynose, turns to the kids and says, "Now, how many of you children would like to go to heaven?"

Everybody shoots up their hand, except for one little girl.
"Come on, Sally," says Miss Holynose. "Don't you want to go to heaven?"
"Sure I want to go to heaven," replies Sally looking around. "But not with these guys!"

The body of Mendel Kravitz is lying in an open coffin in Finkelstein's Funeral Parlor. As the mourners file past to pay their final respects, Hymie Goldberg clucks his tongue and shakes his head.
"He was an atheist, he never believed in heaven and hell, you know," Hymie says to Grandpa Finkelstein, who is standing by the coffin, looking somber.
"Really?" replies the Fink, looking at the dead Mendel's immaculate suit and tie. "Then I guess he is all dressed up with nowhere to go!"

Gorgeous Gloria is fed up with her usual boyfriends, so she decides to join a computer match-making service. She sends in all her personal information and preferences and then waits excitedly for the result.
The very next day she gets a phone call from her first prospective date. After ten minutes of chatty conversation, the guy suddenly says, "I'm nine inches long and four inches around! Are you interested?"
"Interested?" cries Gloria. "I'm fascinated! And how big is your prick?"

Nivedano...

(Drumbeat)

(Gibberish)

Nivedano...

(Drumbeat)

Be silent. Close your eyes. Feel your body to be completely frozen.
Now look inwards with your totality of consciousness, with an urgency as if this is going to be your last moment of life.
Deeper and deeper...
Silence starts deepening. A subtle, undefinable bliss starts arising, a fragrance of udumbara tree. You are very close to buddha; just a little more and you ARE the buddha.
The only quality that buddha has is witnessing. Both the words mean the same: be a witness and you are a buddha.

To make this witnessing clear, more clear,
Nivedano...

(Drumbeat)

Relax. The body is there, the mind is there, but you are neither.
You are the witness.
This witness is your only treasure. Everything will be burned on a funeral pyre; only the witness cannot be touched by any fire, by any sword. The witness is your eternity.

The evening was great on its own, but your silence, your peace, your blissfulness have made it a thousand times more beautiful. If you can keep witnessing through the day, twenty-four hours, your whole life will become just an ecstasy.
A man who dies without knowing ecstasy lived in vain, or lived not.
Before Nivedano calls you back, collect as much fragrance as possible to bring with you. You are coming back as a buddha, with the same grace, with the same joy, with the same fulfillment.

Nivedano...

(Drumbeat)

Come back silently.
Sit for a few minutes recollecting the experience you have been through, because you have to keep this experience around the clock. A day will come when you will not need to remember it. It will be there whether you look at it or not.
That day comes! -- I can say it with absolute authority, because it has come to me; why can it not come to you?
Every human being is a seed of the buddha.
Blessed are those seeds which come to their total flowering.

Okay, Maneesha?
Yes, Beloved Master.